

PZ
3

FT MEADE
GenColl

R63286

THE GRAFTONS


OR

LOOKING FORWARD



16 35

E

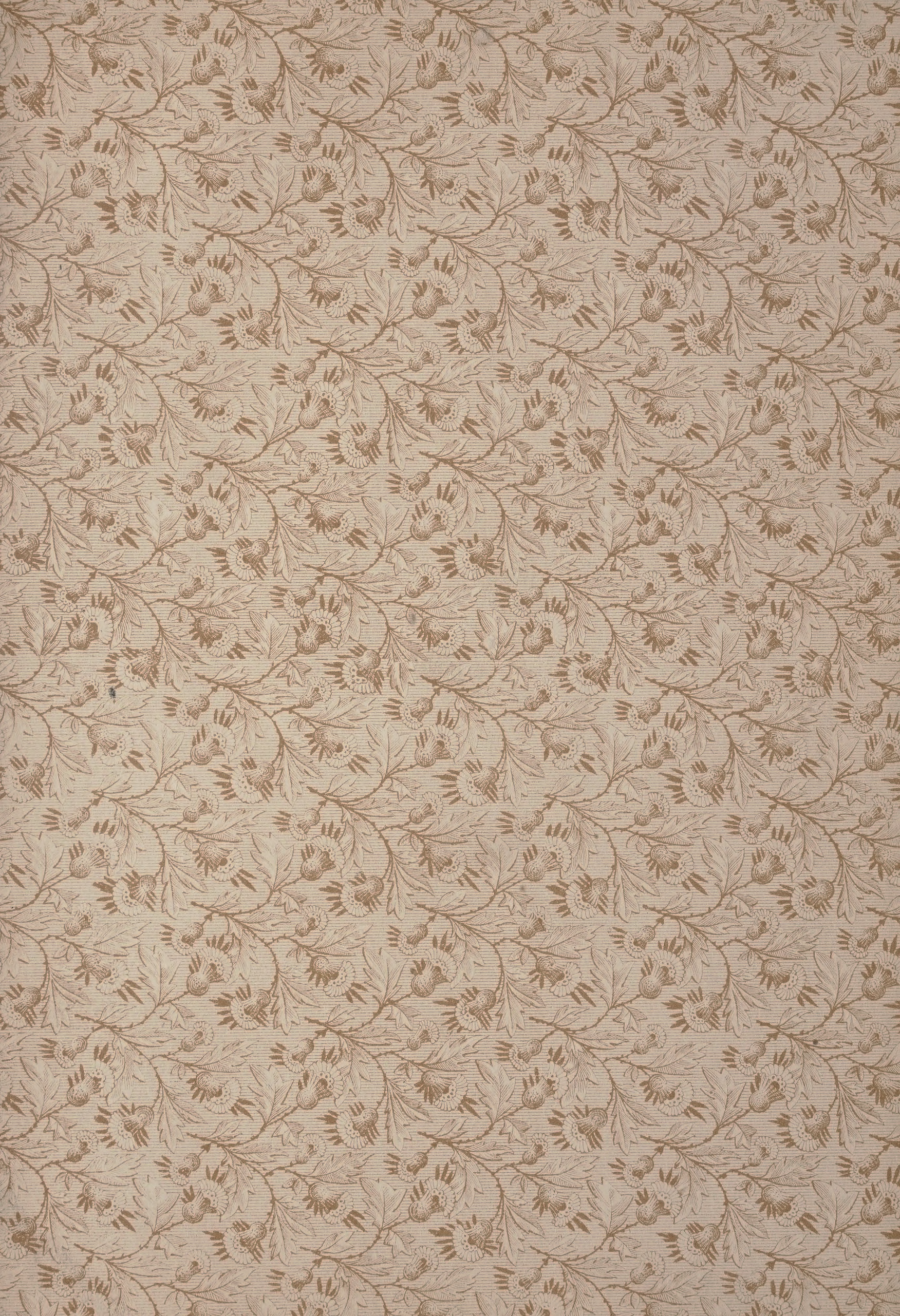


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Class PZ3 Copyright No.

Shelf R6328G

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



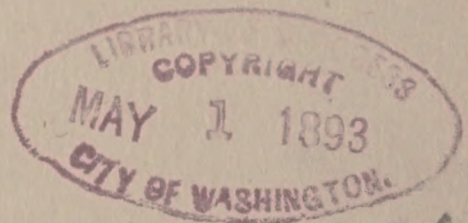
THE GRAFTONS;

OR,

LOOKING FORWARD.

A STORY OF PIONEER LIFE.

John
J. Rankin
BY
~~S. L.~~ ROGERS.



21408y'

CHICAGO:

MILTON GEORGE PUBLISHING HOUSE.

1893.

[Handwritten signature]

PZ 3
R6328G

Entered according to act of Congress in the year 1890 by
S. L. ROGERS,
In the office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

PREFACE.

He who reads this story without having previously been made aware of the conditions surrounding the Western farmer, will very likely consider it overdrawn and the remedies proposed chimerical and revolutionary. But let him inform himself by actual, thorough and sympathetic inspection of the manner of life lived by the farmer and his family and he will conclude, as the writer has done, that less than what is said in these pages will not answer the pressing need of the time and that the immediate future may see very much more *demanded*.

Twenty years, spent as the owner and occupier of a farm upon which sons and daughters have grown to man and womanhood, have formed the opinions relating to the future of the farmer herein declared. Much of that set down in these pages may be termed "experience," while all is *true*.

I cannot refrain from expressing the hope that "The Graftons," which with me has been a labor of love, may be received without prejudice and read without malice.

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

The Farmer and His Family.....	5
--------------------------------	---

CHAPTER II.

Mary Grafton.....	8
-------------------	---

CHAPTER III.

"Who Maketh Them to Differ".....	11
----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV.

"Money Answereth All Things".....	14
-----------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V.

Leaving Home.....	17
-------------------	----

CHAPTER VI.

Facing a Frowning World.....	20
------------------------------	----

CHAPTER VII.

Life's Trials.....	22
--------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

Branchton.....	25
----------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

The Lawyer.....	28
-----------------	----

CHAPTER X.

Questions and Answers.....	31
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER XI.

Mary at Home.....	38
-------------------	----

CHAPTER XII.

Mr Ellery in Trouble.....	44
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER XIII.

Care and Counsel.....	48
-----------------------	----

CHAPTER XIV.

Thoughts and Words.....	53
-------------------------	----

CHAPTER XV.

Sorrow.....	63
-------------	----

CHAPTER XVI.

Grief.....	66
------------	----

CHAPTER XVII.

The New Home.....	69
-------------------	----

CHAPTER XVIII.	
Duty	73
CHAPTER XIX	
The Student	76
CHAPTER XX	
Opinions	80
CHAPTER XXI	
Studies	84
CHAPTER XXII.	
Progress of the Campaign	87
CHAPTER XXIII	
After the Election	91
CHAPTER XXIV	
Something Happens	94
CHAPTER XXV	
The Orphans	98
CHAPTER XXVI.	
Wrangling	102
CHAPTER XXVII.	
The Dawn	104
CHAPTER XXVIII	
The Sun Rises	108
CHAPTER XXIX	
Sunshine	111
Is the World Getting Better	114

THE GRAFTONS, or LOOKING FORWARD.

For, brother, men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptial medicine to rage.

—*Much Ado About Nothing.*

CHAPTER I.

THE FARMER AND HIS FAMILY.

“MOTHER, do you think I ought to go? Oh, I hope I can.”
“Why Mary, you know as well as I, that all depends upon the crops and the weather. Your father wishes you to go and if it is possible to raise the money necessary to send you, you will certainly be sent, but it is so uncertain about the crops.”

Mrs. Grafton sighed as she said this, for she well remembered how often her hopes had been raised, only to be destroyed by the failure of the crops upon which the family depended for a living.

The daughter was a sweet faced, brown haired girl, apparently about sixteen years of age; the mother a care-worn woman of forty, with a refined and intelligent face, bearing the marks of a faded youth which evidently had not been without personal attractions.

Mrs. Grafton was a farmer's wife and bore the imprint of her class. Hard work, care and the wearying responsibilities of her position had caused her to lose the light hearted gaiety which had been a

prominent trait in her character as a girl, while in its place there now appeared a chastened and somewhat constrained cheerfulness which, somehow gave the beholder the impression that tears might readily flow from her eyes upon slight provocation. “A sweet woman who has seen trouble,” came almost involuntarily to the mind of the beholder on first meeting her. The daughter, as became her youth, was yet free from the marks of that care which destroys so much of the pleasure of life and so early gives to most Americans that sorrowful expression, seen when the countenance is in repose, startling even to those closely connected, if unexpectedly encountered.

Mary was a pleasant faced girl of about the usual height. Her figure was trim and shapely and her full brown eyes glistened with a light which betokened intelligence and vivacity. She was the daughter of a farmer in humble circumstances, burdened with debt and struggling wearily along the path of life, yet who cherished for his daughter the highest as-

pirations. Nothing, indeed, seemed to Mr. Grafton too much to hope for his Mary, and in pursuance of his design of giving her the best educational facilities possible, she had been encouraged to think of leaving home to attend a superior school which was located in a neighboring town.

Mr. Grafton himself was a well informed man, having in his youth attended the higher schools attainable in the immediate vicinity of his youthful home and these studies having been followed through life by an earnest endeavor to inform himself at every opportunity. He had been an omnivorous reader and being possessed of a good memory and endowed by nature with a vivid imagination, his descriptions of what he had read were eagerly listened to and he had thus easily influenced his daughter in her tastes and in the choice of her books. Unconsciously to herself her thoughts and aspirations had been directed toward a higher education than seemed possible at home, although, thanks to her father, she had already advanced much farther in general literature than is usual with country girls of any age.

Mr. Grafton well knew that as a pupil in an educational institution she would acquire more from her surroundings and the minds with which she came in contact, than from the books which she might study. At best, the theories and facts accumulated there, form only the tools with which future work may be done.

Fortunate was it for Mary that her parents possessed the qualifications which distinguished them. Mrs. Grafton's gentle manner and retiring disposition was yet tempered by a firm and unwavering advocacy of whatever she regarded as lovely in character or elevating in tendency. Mary was the eldest child and the only daughter; a younger brother, a mere child, completing the family.

Mr. Grafton had emigrated to Kansas from Ohio some ten years previous to the

opening of our story. He had been engaged there, in one of the larger towns of that State, in mercantile business. The failure of a friend whom he had heavily endorsed at the banks, occurring at a critical time in his affairs, caused his own business overthrow. But he was comparatively young, and having been himself a farmer's son, his thoughts seemed irresistibly turned toward the life to which he now looked back with regret.

A change must be made, that was sure, and gathering up the remnant of his means he came to Kansas and bought the farm upon which he had since resided. He was a grave and thoughtful man possessed of great depth of feeling, which however was not to be noted upon the surface. For his family he had the sincerest affection, which it is needless to say, was fully returned.

Mrs. Grafton deeply sympathized with her daughter in her desire for an education and intellectual advancement and yet, mother like she feared to have her daughter leave her, even for a time ever so short. While mother and daughter were still engaged in discussing the probabilities regarding the wheat crop upon which in large measure would depend the ability of the family to send her away, Mr. Grafton came hurriedly into the house and said:

"It is going to storm, mother."

"Why so it is," hastily replied Mrs. Grafton, looking out at the window. "Come Mary, you must help me get the chickens safely into the coop, and we can talk about going away at another time."

Mr. Grafton went out to make everything fast about the stables and mother and daughter hastily caught up the smaller chickens in their aprons and drove the larger ones with the bustling hens before them, to their place of refuge.

Before they could finish their errand the rain, accompanied by a fierce looking cloud and a heavy wind, was upon them. Running hastily to the house they managed to get inside the door just as the

heavily charged cloud burst upon them with all its fury. The lightning with its blinding glare, a furious wind which drove the rain up under the shingles and fairly shook the little cottage with its fury, accompanied by peal upon peal of thunder caused all thoughts of anything but the violence of the storm to leave them.

A moment after, Mr. Grafton dashed in, wet to the skin, and amid the noise and roar of the storm the voice of a child crying with fear, came from the next room "Poor Charlie" came simultaneously from all three, just as the little fellow threw open the door and ran sobbing to his mother for protection. He had been asleep in an inner room and wakened by the storm, had at once sought that wonderful refuge, a mother's arms.

The storm ceased almost as suddenly as it came. The sun soon shone out and the family went out to see how much destruction had been wrought. Mrs. Grafton however soon returned with a box full of half drowned chickens, which she placed near the stove, that the warmth of the fire might revive the feeble spark of life which barely fluttered in their naked and chilled little bodies. The force of the wind had been so great that although the large hay stack, containing Mr. Grafton's entire stock of hay, had been crossed at the top by wires attached to heavy stones at the side, its top had been blown off by the wind and the hay wet to the center. Mr. Grafton made the circuit of his wheat field and found that while the growing wheat was much of it felled to the earth by the violence of the wind and rain, yet as it had not advanced far enough to make a falling down final, no great damage had been done. It was yet green and would in a day or two resume its upright position. Feeling thankful that he had escaped a visitation of hail which might have pounded his crops into the earth, he slowly made his way toward the house.

As usual, the storm had come up towards

the close of the afternoon and night began to fall. Mr. Grafton having only himself to depend upon in the work of the farm and his wife insisting that she "would just as soon milk as not" Mary and herself had this homely duty in charge. Mr. Grafton busied himself with the horses, fed the squealing pigs, helped in separating the cows and calves, made all snug for the night and only as it became too dark to see did he retreat indoors where "mother," as he affectionately called his wife, was busy in quieting little Charlie, who was fretful and sleepy, and at the same time endeavoring to put away the milk in the cellar and sweep out the water from the kitchen, which had been blown by the violence of the storm, under the door. Mary employed herself in getting supper and talking to her father, as he sat near the stove, at which she was at work, of the damage done to the wheat.

"Will it hurt it much, father, do you think?" said she.

"Why, no, I hope not," he replied. "Still all is uncertain and there are yet many chances for loss."

"If we cannot raise the money for you, Molly, this year, we will try to do so next, and you will only be seventeen then."

"Oh dear!" she sighed, "the very idea of putting off for another whole year what I have looked forward to for so long, is so disheartening."

"I know it is and we will hope for the best, but you must not set your heart upon going so strongly as to be unable to bear the disappointment or a failure of our plans."

Supper was now ready, and although it was nearly nine o'clock, the family sat down to the evening meal at the earliest possible moment at which it could have been made ready. Before it was ended little Charlie was fast asleep in his weary mother's arms, and although it was very late the dishes were yet to be washed and put away. When all was done and the family sought repose, it was with aching

bones and weary hearts, filled with nameless forebodings of possible misfortune in store.

CHAPTER II.

MARY GRAFTON.

MORNING found the Graftons early astir. And as the air, refreshed by the shower of the previous evening, was most delightfully invigorating, laden as it was, with the odor of growing vegetation springing into life, they cheerfully and hopefully began again their daily round of duties.

After feeding the animals Mr. Grafton could not refrain from taking a hasty look at the wheat field, the boundaries of which were not far distant from the stables. It was still very largely prone flat upon the surface of the ground, but a close examination convinced him that it was uninjured by the rough treatment it had received. Each blade glistened with moisture in the rays of the rising sun, and as the slight breeze of the early morning caused it to flutter gently in the air, for a moment there came over him a sense of the beauty and loveliness of nature, causing his heart to rise in thankfulness to the great and incomprehensible source of the world of beauty spread out before him.

Just then he heard little Charlie calling him, at the stable, where he had been sent to summon his father to the morning meal.

"Here I am, Charlie," said he, as the little fellow came into sight in his search.

"Mamma say dinner weady, Pa."

"Well, I am ready too," said he. "What has she got for us?"

"Oh mos' eversing I dess."

Taking him in his arms Mr. Grafton walked slowly toward the house, amusing himself meantime by talking to the child whose opening mind was eagerly seeking to know the reason for all which met his wondering gaze.

"What made the lark sing? and Why had he a yellow breast? Was he glad? Did birds sing only when they were glad? Was that what made Mary sing? Did God

like little birds? and if a bad man shot the little bird would God be sorry?" and finally, "What made men be bad?"

Mr. Grafton could not answer, and he realized that the child who was just learning to talk, had already propounded the question of the origin of evil, which staggers the mind of the philosopher.

One thing distinguished the Graftons; as the family met around the table, whether well or scantily spread, each strove to make it a season of light and innocent gaiety. Whatever of disquiet might be weighing upon them it was thrown off and each endeavored to bring something to the common fund of enjoyment. This, which had become a habit with them, had unconsciously become not only a source of pleasure, but had also served to draw the members of the little family more closely together in thought and feeling.

Seated about the breakfast table, little Charlie began to tell his mother of the "buful" little bird and how nicely it sang. "Oh!" said Mrs. Grafton, "that puts me in mind of one of Charlie's speeches yesterday morning. We were out in the garden and I was planting some seeds and had forgotten him for a moment, when I found that he had stuck a feather in the ground, which he had picked up, and smoothing the dirt carefully around its base, he said: 'Now see, mamma, it will grow up a hen, won't it?'"

All laughed good naturedly at Charlie and his hen, while the child appeared in no wise cast down at what seemed the probable failure of his crop.

"Mary, you must go up to town and get some groceries," said Mrs. Grafton. "I did not know that we were out of coffee until this morning, and then there are some other things which we must have."

"I would go," said Mr. Grafton, "but I must finish cultivating the north field."

"O! I will go," said Mary, "I can ride old Jim and that will leave father the good team to work with."

Thus it was arranged that Mary should have the side saddle placed upon a large old horse which had long been the property of the family and was now only occasionally called upon to perform a portion of the work of the farm.

After breakfast Mr. Grafton saddled the old horse and brought him to the door where Mary was ready to mount. Mr. Grafton helped his daughter into the saddle and Mrs. Grafton stood near with a basket containing some choice butter which was to be carried to a lady in town who had requested it sent upon the first opportunity.

The big old horse made but a sorry mount for so fair a burden and as Mr. Grafton assisted in handing up the basket and looking to the security of the various straps and buckles, he sighed as he realized how rough and uncouth a figure the old horse and rather shabbily dressed girl would make in the eyes of the fastidious. As he placed the little shoe in the stirrup and noted the rough and well worn leather, a suspicious dimness came into his eyes as he felt how little he was able to assist in the training of one for whom he thought nothing too good.

Mary saw nothing of this, she was a country girl, unspoiled by the fashionable follies of the day, and while she dearly loved beauty and beautiful things she was yet able to put away all thoughts of what she knew she could not obtain.

Old Jim was honest and true and gravely jogged along. The morning air was like wine to Mary's naturally joyous spirit and she hummed softly to herself the strains of the ballads she loved, until almost before she thought it possible she was at the hitching rack in town where she had been told to leave her horse, while she busied herself with the business of the morning.

Plainville was a little town of some five hundred inhabitants. It was a railway station and boasted of a dozen stores, a

bank, a grist mill, two or three churches and the usual amount of scandal and jealousy. People of all kinds there were; some good, a few bad and many quite indifferent. It was an ordinary village, neither town nor country, without the advantages of either and having some of the evils of both.

As Mary drew near the rack, which was just at the edge of the sidewalk and near the store she intended patronizing, she saw among the loungers standing near, the swaggering form of John Busted, the worthless son of the wealthy man of the village. Mary had often with her mother visited at several residences in the town and knew many of the people. Of Busted she knew enough to despise him.

Seeing that she intended stopping, John came forward and proffered his services in helping her to dismount. This she instantly determined to prevent.

"I believe, sir," said she, "that I do not need your assistance; Mr. Weldon, will you please take my basket a moment?"

"Why, certainly, certainly I will, Miss Mary," said Mr. Weldon.

John colored with anger and slunk away, to meet the derisive winks and nods of the bystanders.

As soon as relieved of the heavy basket, Mary sprang lightly to the ground and tied old Jim, in a way that convinced the onlookers that she had often done the like before.

Mr. Weldon was the village blacksmith, a man of vigorous frame and speech, who though now growing old, did not hesitate, if need be, to back up his rather free way of speaking, with muscular force. As this was understood to be his way, from traditional reports of a former time, and as his manner gave promise, upon occasion, of an instant "falling from grace," "Uncle Bill," as he was familiarly called, was allowed to say and do pretty much as he pleased.

Mary pinned her riding skirt to the

saddle and taking the basket from Uncle Bill, at once sought the home of the lady to whom the butter had been sent.

She had gone but a short distance when one of the loafers spoke up:

"Well, John, you got the mitten that time."

"The little minx, I'll get even with her for that. I wouldn't a cared if it hadn't a been for this crowd a standing around."

"Pooh! John, she is too smart for the likes of you."

"Well now," said John, with a meaning leer, "I've got even with girls just as smart as she is afore now."

"You'd better make your peace with God, if you harm George Grafton's girl," said Uncle Bill.

"Who's George Grafton? He aint nobody. Just one of them poor farmers that you can buy for ten dollars a head."

"George Grafton is what you never will be—a man—and if men were selling for ten cents a head, you couldn't buy the little finger of a man, if it wasn't for your dad's money. Grafton is a quiet man, but that girl is like the apple of yer eye to him and if he needs any help—why he can get it—that's all."

A chuckle of endorsement of Uncle Bill's little speech went round just as the elder Busted approached, who was gradually made aware of what had occurred.

"George Grafton is bringing up that girl with too high and mighty notions," said he. "There he is, poor and in debt further than he can see a way to pay. He haint got no help. His boy is a girl, and they tell me he is talkin' er sendin' her to college or some such fool notion, and they say he spends at least fifty dollars a year for books and papers and sich. It is well enough for a man to have a decent education. I suppose he's got that, now why don't he stop foolin' with books and try and make some money."

"Grafton is a good worker," ventured one of the loungers.

"Yes, maybe he is, but he don't manage right."

"Well how ought he to manage?"

"Well he aint no use for so many books. They say he's got a house full now, and he don't need more'n one good newspaper. The county paper is enough for any farmer to read. Then them reform notions er his is enough to put any man down. Let the farmers tend to their business and we'll tend to oun."

Mr. Busted was a director and reputed heavy stock holder in the local bank; his business consisted as he himself expressed it, in looking for "soft snaps." He was a speculator, a buyer of grain and an occasional loaner of money at unmentionable rates, standing ready to buy up property of any kind, when its owner stood in direful need. Although all his efforts were directed towards taking advantage of the necessities of his needy fellow creatures, he veiled his deeds with a thin gloss of very ordinary religion. He made no pretensions to sanctity and although a member of the Presbyterian church, he seldom attended the prayer or official meetings of the society, but when it came to cash support, he gave more money than any other five members and thus came to be the most influential member the church possessed. Indeed, without him it seemed impossible for the church to exist. His son was an idle, worthless rake of twenty, who as a boy had been guilty of all the meanness possible to mean boys, and who as a man bid fair to eclipse his youthful record.

"Now there's that girl," he continued, "she ought to help her folks, no use of her reading po'try or anything er that kind. She ought to work out, she could earn at least two dollars a week, then if she was away from home her board would be saved and that's two more; that's two hundred dollars a year; for ten years that alone is two thousand, but handle it right, put the savings of each year out at interest or employ it more profitably, and in-

stead of two thousand, in ten years it would be four or five more than George Grafton is worth. Yes, she ought to work out; there is Miss Busteed wants a girl now."

"You and me," said Uncle Bill, "ain't fit to have that girl in our houses; we wouldn't know how to treat her, why blame your old hide there is the real glory in them great brown eyes of hers. I ain't got no son but if I had one like John there, I'd know better than to mention such a thing."

It was Uncle Bill and Mr. Busteed ventured no reply; he noted sharply, however, the action of those whose looks and nods betokened special approval of the free speech, and muttering something like "you'll see, you'll see," he strode hastily away.

CHAPTER III.

"WHO MAKETH THEM TO DIFFER."

AS Mary returned to the store, after leaving the butter at the house to which she had taken it, the loungers, who still remained where she had left them, moved very politely out of her way as she entered the store. Mr. Baker, the keeper, who was also the village postmaster, saluted her quite pleasantly:

"Good morning, awful nice morning ain't it? Got lots of mail for your folks."

"Ah, is that so, are there any letters for us?"

"Why, I believe so," said he, "but your box is more'n full of papers, you see the magazines is come."

Mary expressed pleasure at having the magazines to read; the coffee and other articles were soon purchased and all placed in the basket she had brought; she led old Jim up to the sidewalk which answered the purpose of a horse block; a moment more and she was in the saddle, Mr. Baker brought out the basket and handed it up to her and she was on the road home.

As soon as she got out of the village, the

horse moving gently along she took from the basket in front of her, the various newspapers and magazines, looked each over hurriedly, reading a little here and there. Opening a magazine she read what a wealthy lady had given as a description of her mode of life, and this is what she read:

"We breakfast about ten. Breakfast occupies the best part of an hour, during which we read our letters and pick up the latest news in the papers. After that we have to go and answer our letters, and my mother expects me to write her notes of invitation or reply to such. Then I have to go into the conservatory to feed the canaries and parrots and cut off the dead leaves and faded flowers from the plants. Then it is time to dress for lunch and at two o'clock we lunch. At three my mother likes me to go with her when she makes her calls, and we then come home to a five o'clock tea when some friends drop in. After that we get ready to take our drive in the park, and then we go home to dinner, and after dinner we go to the theatre or the opera, and then when we get home I am so dreadfully tired that I don't know what to do."

Mary had read very much more than most girls of her age; she knew that the life thus described was lived by but very few in our largest cities, but as she closed the book and strove to imagine the life thus brought before her, the utter vacuity of such an existence, was most fully impressed upon her. How could sensible people live such a life. Ah, hers was a preferable life, she thought. The dear faces at home rose up before her and with a glow of exultation she patted poor Jim as the only representative at hand, of the little band, dearer than all the world beside to her.

Turning over the newspapers her eye fell upon a paragraph and this is what she saw:

"THE MISERY OF THE VERY POOR."

"In a New England town the other day, a newsboy hardly higher than the platform

was run over by a horse car and fatally hurt. What did the self supporting baby of six years do, when writhing in the agonies of a terrible death?

He called piteously for his mother. Why? To shriek piteously upon her breast? That she might clasp him while the surgeon worked? Ah, no. It was to give her his day's earnings.

"I've saved 'em, mother," he cried. "I've saved 'em all. Here they are."

When his little, clenched, dirty hand fell rigid, it was found to contain four cents."

Mary's eyes filled with tears. Were there people like that? Did God care for the poor? How could he if such things were permitted to continue? And yet she knew that this was but one of a thousand daily incidents in the life of the cities, where brilliant sights and horrid scenes are so inextricably comingled. What a world this was; how much of happiness and ah! how much of misery.

As she rode up the lane at home and came near the house, her mother, who had been on the watch, came out to meet her; giving her the basket she sprang lightly from the saddle and throwing her arms about her mother, impulsively kissed her.

The watchful mother noted the tear upon her daughter's cheek, although her eyes were laughing and her face was wreathed with smiles.

"Why, Mary," she began, "has anything happened to you?"

"Oh no, mother dear, but I was just reading something which made me feel so sorry, and when I saw you and thought what a pleasant home I had and how much I loved you, I couldn't help hugging you just a little."

Mrs. Grafton was too wise a woman to make many inquiries. She knew her daughter's impulsive spirit; she had full confidence in her, and for the moment busied herself in helping Mary as they tugged at the dry old straps and rusty buckles of the saddle. Taking it off she

placed it upon the spacious back porch, while light-hearted Mary led the old horse to the pasture, swung open the gate, and stripping off the bridle, turned the faithful beast loose to crop the short grass.

Just then she espied her father coming in to dinner from the field. By going across the corner of the pasture she could readily intercept him as he came up the farm road, and this she did, actually running part of the way, that she might meet him at a certain bend in the road.

Mr. Grafton was driving the team, which with dangling chains and rattling harness, were swinging heavily along, while he walked behind. Mary came up and putting her hand in that of her father's, they walked along "swinging hands" like a couple of school girls.

At first neither spoke a word; at last Mary broke the silence, saying:

"Father, what makes such a difference in the conditions of life, in which people are found?"

"Why, what makes you ask that?" said he.

Mary then related what she had been reading, saying that the great difference between the very rich and the very poor was to her a mystery, if all were the children of God, who loved all alike.

Opportunity makes people, and the lack of it prevents them," said he. "Don't you remember what Gray says:"

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear,
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

"Oh yes," said she, "so many people never have a chance; opportunity doesn't come to them. Why is it?"

"Up to a comparatively recent period, orthodox people comforted themselves with the theory of Rev. Dr. Malthus, as an answer to this question," said Mr. Grafton. "This theory held to the belief that the increase of population in the world tends to outrun the means of subsistence. That more people are born into the world than

can properly be cared for. That wars, pestilence, famine and hardships generally, are the God-appointed means of thinning out an undesirable increase. That God has created more people than he can care for and that he then sets men to killing and destroying one another, in various ways, as a means of getting rid of his own mistakes. This theory was very convenient and consoling and laid all blame—if blame there was—upon God. Great generals and small persecutors consoled themselves with the idea that they were co-workers with Deity in the necessary work of the world. In much the same way the people who held slaves in this country, a while ago, found a passage in the scriptures which they took a great fancy to. Old Noah cursed one of his grandsons, saying: "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethern," and the southern divines held, without the slightest authority, that Canaan symbolized the black race and that as Noah in the Bible had cursed Canaan, they were carrying out the work of the Lord in America by holding negroes in slavery. It was a very slim foundation, but what there was came from the bible and they made much of it for the reason that they could lay the blame on Noah or the bible. The real truth then was, as it is now with the poor creatures you were pitying a while ago; the whole trouble comes from the insane and murderous greed of man.

"Now-a-days there is another passage that people who are engaged in 'keeping poor people in their places' are very anxious to quote and that is, Christ's saying at a particular time, 'the poor always ye have with you but me ye have not always,' as though he meant people to assist in the work of making poverty permanent, but if they will only look it up, they will find that this was really said in opposition to a protest of Judas, and a preceding verse exactly describes the people who are repeating what Jesus said without noting the

circumstances. It is: 'This he said not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag and bare what was put therein.' 'Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.' That's the foundation of the whole trouble."

They had now arrived at the stable where Charlie was awaiting them, and as Mr. Grafton stopped to take the little fellow in his arms, Mary drew the reins from his hands, tied them in the proper rings and deftly unharnessed one horse before Charlie had finished telling his father a wonderful story about a little bird which the house-cat had caught and eaten. The other horse was quickly stripped, Mary led them to the trough, while her father pumped the water for the thirsty beasts. Soon they were placed in their stalls and all then went in to dinner.

Just as they reached the back door they saw a man driving a pair of ponies before a buggy that was moving rapidly along the public highway. As he came to the entrance to the Grafton place he turned and came up at a smart trot.

"It is Busted," said Mr. Grafton, "I wonder what makes him come in."

"Howdy, Grafton," said the man of business, "I was going out to Barnes' place on a little business, and I just drove in to let you know that I'll have to have that money sooner than I thought, fact is I need it bad; you haven't it by you, I spose?"

"No," said Mr. Grafton, "I haven't, and I did not try to get it, as you told me that it could run until after harvest, just as well as not."

"So I did, but I didn't know what was coming. Well, I'll have to have it."

"Why," said Mr. Grafton, "I don't see how I can get it for you unless I borrow it."

"No, I spose not, but you can do that, can't you?"

"Possibly I can, but I do not know who to go to for a loan. Can you tell me?"

"Well," said Busted, "I expect the old squire is the only chance."

Mr. Grafton made no immediate reply, for he knew, as did every one in the vicinity, that old "Squire" Clinch as he was called, was but a creature of Busteed's, and others, who having no capital of his own did a precarious business as loan agent, and was expected by his employers to take advantages which they were ashamed openly to extort.

"Well," said Mr. Grafton, I'll try what I can do for you in a day or two."

Busteed whirled his ponies about and with a parting injunction to "be sure and fix that matter up," he was gone.

Mrs. Grafton had been a listener to the colloquy just related, and as the family sat down to dinner, the knowledge of the serious financial straits they were in, and the uncertainty of the future, was for once too weighty to be thrown aside.

"Why don't you laugh to me?" said little Charlie, noting the grave and silent faces.

CHAPTER IV.

"MONEY ANSWERETH ALL THINGS."

GEORGE GRAFTON had for some time been "running behind," as the neighbors said. The loss of a crop, followed by a long continued time of low prices, had reduced his means of living to the lowest possible point.

When the farm upon which he lived was purchased, he had bought it on "payments" and as the crops raised had not enabled him to pay the balance of the purchase money at the appointed time, the farm was mortgaged and the money raised for that purpose. The mortgage drew a heavy rate of interest and formed a serious annual charge. He did not look upon life as a mere opportunity to collect a store of dimes and dollars and so, out of regard to what he considered the higher interests of himself and family, many opportunities for accumulating money were allowed to pass as unworthy the sacrifice which he felt they would be called upon to make in obtaining it. It thus happened that he found himself the subject of many criticisms, on

the part of his neighbors, regarding his management of affairs; most of which were in the same line as that of Mr. Busteed regarding Mary's services. It thus came about that although he had been reasonably successful in his business of farming, so far at least as raising crops was concerned, yet he found that he was not only not gaining financially, but was actually running astern. And when he compared his condition with that of farmers about him, he found that his condition was fully as good as the average. Those who had raised more had also taken greater risks, and lost more. Those who had been raising cattle had lost heavily in their operations by the fall of prices as controlled by the manipulators of the great markets.

The next morning Mr. Grafton went to the village, resolved to make some arrangement, if possible, to obtain the money to pay off Busteed, hoping that the wheat crop might turn out so favorably as to relieve his necessities at least for the time.

Arrived in the town he at once sought the bank and was there told that "they were not loaning now," but that they had in the vault some funds belonging to a private party which might possibly be got with a good, well-secured note, but, said the cashier, "if the note suits, he will discount it, he don't loan at a specified rate; says he'll buy good notes. How much do you want?"

"I have a note out for a hundred dollars that I want to pay," said Mr. Grafton.

"You will have to have an even hundred then,"

"Yes."

"Well then I expect your best plan will be to make a note for one hundred and twenty-five and get a good signer and we will submit the note and see what can be got; I suppose sixty days' time will suit you?"

"Yes, I can pay it then, I hope, but what amount will I realize from the note you describe?"

"Well, the party who has this money is pretty hard and he is a close shaver,"

"Yes, I presume so, but can't you give me an idea of the amount he would allow on such a note."

"Well Grafton, this man loans money for what he can make and he makes all he can, and I don't reckon you would get much over the amount you need. Might some."

"You mean to say then, that he would not give much over a hundred for such a note?"

"Well that's about it."

"Let's see," said Grafton, "that is twenty-five per cent for two months time, or twelve and a half per cent per month."

"O you needn't to go wild now; that aint the way to look at it, it is simply buying the note for what it will bring. You see money is scarce and a thing is worth what it will bring. You make your note and if anybody will give more for it, take it to 'em, there's no force to this thing. This is a free country."

"You know very well that there are so few who have any money that they are able to take what advantage they please," said Grafton.

"O, well if you want to get huffy about it I don't believe this party would loan to you anyhow, he don't want no trouble with anybody."

Grafton turned upon his heel and left the bank; he knew as well as he cared to know, that the mythical personage who had the money was none other than the cashier himself, who thus sought to "turn an honest penny."

But the money must be had and Grafton was determined to secure it if possible. He had borrowed it of Busted at "legal rates," or twelve per cent per annum, and he was aware that as harvest was approaching and the farming community being called upon for unusual expenditures, were at this time nearly all borrowers of money in large or small quantities,

that he should be obliged to pay a heavier rate than the note now drew. Resolving to know the worst, he went at once to Squire Clinch's office and made known his business.

"What security have you to give?" said Clinch.

"Well," said Mr. Grafton, "I guess I would as soon give you a chattel mortgage, as to ask anybody to go on my note."

"What on?"

"Well, on my big team of horses."

"You want a hundred dollars?"

"Yes "

"For sixty days?"

"Yes."

"Well, you make out a note and mortgage for one hundred and ten, and I'll get the money."

"Why, that's five per cent a month," said Grafton.

"Pooty near it, that's a fact, but the fellows that I loan for is sharpers, they have to have their interest, and then I must get a little for my work of making loans. Best I can do for ye, Grafton, fact is, money is scarce."

"Well, I'll see, said Grafton, as he turned and went out.

He went at once to the shop of "Uncle Bill" Weldon, the blacksmith.

In small villages and country places the blacksmith shop is a source of neighborhood gossip unequalled. Men go there to have work performed and being away from home are obliged to wait upon it. Conversation is certain to ensue regarding neighborhood news, scandals and quarrels, and topics ranging from the last message of the President down to the legitimacy of the latest child born in the "settlement" are fully discussed and decided.

Uncle Bill was hammering away at a piece of iron and barely glanced at Grafton as he entered; having finished his "heat" and returned the iron to the forge he straightened up and began to pump at the bellows.

"Uncle Bill," said Grafton, "I want to speak to you a moment."

"All right, say ahead."

Grafton walked to the further corner of the little shop, Weldon followed, and in a low tone the farmer said:

"I've got to have some money and I've been over to the bank and around to the old squire's, but they all want rates that no man can long stand to pay; do you know of anyone who has a little by him that ain't in the regular thieving line?"

"No," said Weldon, "I don't. I did a while ago, but being as its getting so near harvest and everybody having to have more or less, I don't think you can do better than to take up with their offers."

"Well," said Grafton, "if I must, I must."

"Yes, there ain't no other show, least ways not now."

Turning about Mr. Grafton went at once to Clinch's office, made out the mortgage, secured the money, secured his note, which he found at the bank; thinking as he paid it that possibly the mythical party who was willing to loan at twelve and a half per cent per month had now secured another hundred dollars to loan at an increased rate. He went immediately home. As he drove up to the stable Mary came out and began to unharness the team upon one side while her father was engaged upon the other; practice had enabled her to do this very quickly and she had "her horse" unhitched and was leading it to the water trough before her father had finished the one he was engaged upon.

"Pretty smart boy I've got," said Mr. Grafton.

"I wish I was a boy, then I could help you."

"Why, don't you help me now?"

"O I try to do what little I can; but it is so little and there is so much to be done."

"Ah! Molly, you are a great help to me as it is. I don't know what I would do without you and the folks in the house."

During this little colloquy Mary had been

engaged in narrowly watching her father's actions and manner, hoping thereby to get some inkling of the condition of his mind. She knew very well the purpose of his visit to Plainville, but she chose not to ask him directly regarding this, as she was well aware that in case he wished her to know, he could readily tell her, and then if from any cause he did not wish her to be informed she had too much regard for his wishes to seek to pry into the matter.

Presently he said: "My plan of going to school will have to be given up, wont it father?"

"Not if I can help it," said he. "Perhaps the wheat may do wonders for us."

"But that is so frail a hope. It isn't possible is it, for us to receive enough from that to meet the demands and send me away too?"

"Oh, yes it is possible."

"But it isn't probable?"

"Why, I fear not; I wish I could say something more encouraging, but I can't. You must be a brave girl, Molly, I know you can be. You are young. The world is all before you, and I feel sure that what we all so much desire for you can somehow be accomplished."

"Then you don't think I am one of the flowers

'Born to blush unseen

And waste its sweetness on the desert air.'"

"Bless your heart, you are one of the flowers, at any rate," said Mr. Grafton. "There comes mother and Charlie for us now."

It was but a little way from the kitchen door to the front of the horse stables and Mrs. Grafton having finished her preparations for the noonday meal, came out to hurry them in to dinner, little Charlie running down the gate before her.

"Father," said Mary, "you go in with mother and I will feed the horses. I can just as well as not; you know I am your boy now;" and she set her straw hat jauntily upon one side of her head, and

saying, "come old fellows, you've drank enough," she led the horses to the stable, whistling a few bars from "Suwanee River."

Mr. Grafton stood looking after the brave hearted girl and as his wife came up said: "That girl is a wonder to me sometimes; isn't she a jewel?"

"She had set her heart on going to school," said Mrs. Grafton.

"Well, we must have her go, if such a thing is possible."

"Boy," called Mr. Grafton, quite loudly, "give those horses ten ears of corn apiece;" and a voice came back from the depths of the stable, imitating as well as it could the rough tones of a man.

"All right, sir, just as you say, and not that I care."

CHAPTER V.—LEAVING HOME.

THE days come and go. Life is but a chain of events following each other in uninterrupted succession and we are hurried forward to the march of time, whether we will or no.

Thus it was with the Graftons; the Summer came and went. Their hopes and expectations, as with others, rose and fell with the varying tide of experiences forced upon them. They did what they could, and having done this they were still at the mercy of circumstances over which they had not the slightest control. Every cloud that arose in the west made them feel their entire dependence upon the elemental forces which might within an hour deprive them of the ability to pay the indebtedness which hung like a heavy weight upon their minds. Every moment of waking consciousness was burdened and even the dreams of midnight took on the somber hue of possible disappointment and defeat.

Love sweetened the load. A little love, a little hope, with confidence in the rectitude of intent, can sweeten the life of even the veriest slave. With these, life is a pleasure and each day a new found opportunity.

Mr. Grafton's harvest had not failed

him. Despite his fears and exigencies of his position, he had been successful, and although obliged to make sale of his crops to meet his pressing obligations, and at a lower rate than he felt sure could be later obtained, he yet had been enabled to meet the demands made upon him. The immediate pressure had been removed and for the present he was safe.

The Graftons sympathized deeply with their daughter's desire to attend some institution of learning, which they hoped might afford an opportunity for enlightenment, and a glimpse into that broader and higher life of the mind, which once beheld and comprehended, lifts its votaries to a position from whence they survey the tangled web of life with an equanimity and confidence felt only by those who have learned that the mind of man is indeed and truth a kingdom.

"Mary," said Mrs. Grafton one day, "I have a plan in mind for you."

"And what is it, mother?" said she.

"It is this: we cannot pay your expenses at school this year, certainly; and yet I feel that the attempt ought to be made. Now I have thought that possibly a place might be found for you in Dr. McFarland's Institute in Topeka, provided you could be able to pay your way by work in the household; you know this is a boarding school and there must be a good deal of work to be done. What do you think of this; would you be willing to undertake it?"

"Why I certainly would if you approved of the plan."

"As to that I could not tell," said Mrs. Grafton, "unless I could view for myself the surroundings and see what would be required of you. Of course, as a member, of Dr. McFarland's household you would be reasonably safe, but I could not tell whether the position you would be called upon to take would be of any advantage to you or not."

"I certainly could advance in my studies there."

"Yes, but there are other things to be thought of," said Mrs. Grafton. "I have talked this matter over with your father and we are both of the opinion that the only way to settle it definitely, will be by our going to Topeka and making the necessary enquiries."

"It is nearly time for the Fall term to commence isn't it?" said Mary.

"Yes, and if we go we must start not later than next week."

Youth is hopeful and expectant, it "Looks Forward" to the future with pleasure. Mary was anxious to make the attempt, and it was decided that Mrs. Grafton and her daughter should on the following week, go to Topeka and see what could be done.

The few days which intervened were busy with preparation in the Grafton household. Somehow it became known that Mary was to go away to school and that she was expecting to attend Dr. McFarland's aristocratic Institute for young ladies. Mrs. Grafton did not voluntarily speak of it, but in the country unless one refuses to answer the usual civil enquiries of neighbors' it is almost impossible to keep anything long a secret. Being repeated from one to another, the story grew to such proportions that the real facts regarding the attempt of a poor farmer's daughter to obtain educational advantages, and her willingness to do menial work to secure them, were distorted and made to represent the acts of foolish people who desired to ape the manners of those above them in the social scale.

It became at once the topic of general comment; Busted remarking that pride went before a fall, and that Grafton was only making a fool of that girl of his. She would get notions that would spoil her and make trouble for the family. He had known, he said, of one such case before; the folks were well meaning people enough and thought everything of Lucy and sent her off to the city and in a little while,

maybe it was a year or two, she was walking the streets a ruined girl.

Mr. Ellery, the Presbyterian minister, rather guardedly took an opposing view. Mary was a bright girl and he felt sure would give a good account of herself. That she should desire an education he thought very commendable, and if she was resolved upon obtaining it, her parents were doing right in assisting her, at some sacrifice, to gratify her ambition. He was acquainted with Mr. McFarland, he said, and would give Mary a letter of introduction, which might be of some service.

The appointed day soon arrived, and Mr. Grafton drove to the station with his family. Little Charlie was too young to fully comprehend what was meant by his sister's departure.

"You will come back pretty soon won't you, sister," he said.

"Yes, dear," said Mary, "I hope so," and for the first time the full meaning of leaving her home came suddenly upon her. She had been occupied with the preparations connected with the departure; her mother had been constantly by her side and knowing that she was to accompany her on the journey she had not fully realized that the ties, which with her were so strong, were so soon to be even temporarily sundered. The tears filled her eyes and for the moment she was sorry the journey had been undertaken.

"Ma, don't let Mary go," said the child, "she will cry all the time if you do."

"O no she won't; Mary knows that there is much to do and that nothing of value is ever gained without some sacrifice," said the mother.

Before leaving the wagon and just as they came into the town Mr. Grafton said: "Mary, there is one rule which, if you will follow, will I think, be to you a sure guide; it is this: Never do anything which you think your father and mother would not approve."

"O father," said she, "you know I would not do that."

"I know you would not now," said he, "but the future may change you. We cannot tell what may be in store for you."

As Mr. Grafton said this he took his daughter's hand in his and said: "Do you promise, Mary?"

"Yes," said she, slowly, looking straight into his eyes, "I will."

Mr. Grafton drove his wagon up to the depot, helped out his family and when he had hitched his team, came into the station house to wait for the train which was shortly due.

The arrival and departure of trains at country stations form a connecting link between the gay outside world and the dull and rather monotonous existence lived by dwellers in country villages. Very few inhabitants but what occasionally congregate at train time to catch a glimpse of the rapidly moving train, the strange faces and to take note of who among them is going away or returning from abroad.

Mr. Ellery was there with his letter of introduction, as he had promised; this he gave to Mrs. Grafton and wishing them a pleasant journey, he withdrew.

"Uncle Bill" Weldon, was also present; his shop was near at hand and he was often at the depot for a few minutes at train time. "It's as good as a show," he often remarked. A fellow can't pound all the time and I don't believe I lose anything by taking a breathing spell once in a while."

Watching his opportunity he said to Mary unheard by others: "Don't you ever forget the old folks, Mary; just remember that you won't never have any friends to equal them, if you live to be as old as Methuselah."

The train came thundering along and amid hearty good-byes and hurried hand shakes they were off.

Arrived in Topeka they went at once to a quiet hotel which had been recommended to Mrs. Grafton.

The "Institute" was at some distance

from the center of the city; taking the street cars they soon came to the place. It was a large rambling edifice, with spacious grounds. With some trepidation Mrs. Grafton told the rather thin and pale girl who answered her summons, that she wished to speak to Dr. McFarland, and they were shown into the large reception room adjoining the hallway. The room was large and the ceiling lofty; it was tastefully furnished with old fashioned and somewhat worn furniture; the walls were hung with portraits and paintings; a large piano occupied one corner. Upon it was a vase filled with rare flowers; some statuettes posed upon brackets, and from an elevated position a full sized bust of some ponderous worthy looked down upon them. They had just glanced about the room when the door softly opened and an elderly gentleman in slippers advanced to meet them. Mrs. Grafton rose, saying, "Dr. McFarland, I suppose," to which he bowed assent. "I have a letter of introduction," said she, "from Mr. Ellery, of Plainville."

"Ah," said he, "pray be seated."

As he was reading the letter, Mrs. Grafton took a rapid inventory of his features, but without being able to determine much regarding his character. He was of about the average height and size; his face was quite full, with puffy cheeks, rather inclining to red in color, denoting a lack of sufficient exercise, and as she thought, a possible high temper. Before she had fully made up her mind as to the kind of a man the doctor might be, having finished the letter and now knowing the character of the case in hand, his manner underwent a slight change from the rather stately air with which he began the interview.

"I do not know Mrs. Grafton," said he, "That we have any vacancy in the line which it seems you are thinking of. We have a great many applications of this kind and really I must say, that so far, they have given us more trouble than any

that we have to deal with. No doubt your daughter would expect all the advantages we could give her, and as a necessary result of this expectation, would not be very profitable as a helper."

"My daughter would certainly strive to please, and is so anxious to attend school that she would be willing to work pretty hard to secure a position which would enable her to pursue her studies," said Mrs. Grafton.

"You are aware Mrs. Grafton that if your daughter should take the position of helper that she could not associate upon terms of equality with the young ladies of the house. That she could only receive instruction in the studies taken by the day scholars who do not room in the house and that her position would be far from pleasant."

"And what are those studies," said Mrs. Grafton.

"They are confined to the higher English studies and the languages," said the doctor. "Perhaps I should have sooner stated that the whole direction of these household matters is in the hands of Mrs. McFarland. Should you think it worth while after what I have told you, I will summon her."

"I should like to see Mrs. McFarland," said Mrs. Grafton.

The doctor withdrew and they were left to their reflections and a survey of the room in which they sat. Just as Mary was trying to make up her mind which one of the ancient Greek philosophers was represented by the big bust, which scowled upon them from its position high up in one corner, the door again opened.

CHAPTER VI.—FACING A FROWNING WORLD.

MRS. MCFARLAND was apparently about fifty years of age, spare, slight and nervous. As she advanced to meet Mrs. Grafton and her daughter, for she it was who came in, that lady's attention was strangely attracted by

the short bobbing curls with which each side of her face was furnished. They shook and danced in such a way as to give a stranger a very good idea of the energetic, nervous and quite business like lady who wore them.

Mr. McFarland tells me," said she, "that your daughter wishes to assist us in the work of the house as a means of defraying her expenses."

"That is what we came for," said Mrs. Grafton. "You are Mrs. McFarland, I suppose?"

"Yes, you will excuse me, I suppose I should have introduced myself; what kind of work has she been accustomed to do and would she be willing to apply herself do you think?"

"She has been accustomed to the usual housework done upon a farm and I think would be found faithful," said the mother.

Mary sat silently looking first at one of the ladies and then at the other and felt her heart sinking within her. How near and dear her mother seemed to her now that she seemed likely, temporarily, to lose her. The very tones of her voice, as she talked with Mrs. McFarland seemed changed. She wondered that she had not before noted how soft and gentle was her manner and expression. She shrank as Mrs. McFarland glanced keenly at her while she talked; could she endure the life at the school, which did not now seem so attractive as she had pictured it? She could not tell; but of this she felt assured, it must now be attempted.

Meantime the ladies had progressed so far in the negotiations that at Mrs. Grafton's request they went out of the room to inspect the house and that she might see for herself the room she would occupy and the persons she might expect to associate with.

Mary was left alone, and again the feelings of doubt and discouragement came over her. This was what it was to leave home and go among strangers. How

silent it was and how close the air in the room. "Ah, but this will never do," she thought and taking a volume from the table she began turning the leaves and as she became somewhat interested in its contents, courage returned and she again mentally resolved to bravely bear her part in what she now felt must be the struggle of life just opening before her.

Mrs. Grafton was gone some time. When she returned the preliminaries had been arranged and it was agreed that Mary should begin in the morning her round of duties.

They returned at once to the hotel, where Mrs. Grafton explained to her daughter fully the situation at the institute and what her duties would be. Mrs. McFarland had insisted that Mary should be required to do what she termed "kitchen work." She held out a faint hope that after Mary had proved herself both willing and trusty, that possibly she might be able to give her a more agreeable position, but she was very politic and made few promises. Mary was to be allowed the evenings for study, but the day would be entirely taken up by work, with the exception of the hours occupied by recitations.

The prospect was not very encouraging, but it was all there was, and was the best that could be done. They had not expected much and yet they had hoped for more.

The next morning Mrs. Grafton accompanied her daughter to the Institute, gave her a little money charging her to come home immediately if she desired at any time to leave and with many kisses and parting injunctions left her for the first time among strangers.

The journey home was monotonous and tiresome; the child whom she had borne, watched over and tenderly cared for had been left behind and her separate life begun. Somehow Mrs. Grafton could not help feeling as though she were returning from a funeral.

Arriving at Plainville she found Mr. Grafton and Charlie awaiting her. Although she had been absent only for a day or two it had been a lonesome dreary time for them, and Charlie especially was overjoyed at her return.

Mr. Grafton had a few purchases to make and they went at once to the store of Mr. Brown, who as usual was ready to engage in conversation, which he had found led to trade and subsequent profit.

"And so you left Mary at Topeka," said he.

"Yes," said she, "I did."

"Wasn't you sorry to leave her among strangers?"

"Why yes, I was; indeed I was obliged to talk as cheerfully as possible, or we should both have broken down; Mary never left me before; but we both thought it for the best that she should remain."

"Yes, I spose its all right but I should think you would want to keep her at home; and then it must be expensive to keep her there aint it?"

"We have made arrangements which will reduce the expense," said Mrs. Grafton, "but the cost of the trip, incidentals, clothing and the like are still, for us, quite heavy."

Mrs. Grafton felt almost guilty in the fact that she was concealing the fact that Mary was only a "kitchen girl" at the Institute, and was hardly considered a scholar, and yet, mother like, she could not bear to relate the particulars; it was nobody's business, she thought.

"Quite a number of young folks is talking of going away to school now," said Mr. Baker, "and they say John Busteed is going right off."

"John Busteed!" said Mrs. Grafton with some astonishment, "what has induced him to think of such a thing."

"Why it is kinder curious; considerin' that he never would go to school here, but they have a new kind of college now-a-days to teach business, they say, and it's

to one of them he is talking of going. Topeka is where he is going I believe, there is a business college there aint there?"

"Why I believe so," said Mrs. Grafton.

Why this announcement should affect Mrs. Grafton she could not tell. She told herself that this was no concern of hers; that what John did or did not do, could not be a matter of interest to her, and yet she could not bear to think of his being in the same city with Mary. Slight as was the occasion she felt troubled at the thought. She knew as did everyone in the vicinity, of his evil ways and somehow could not shake off the thought that his going to Topeka was in some way connected with his knowledge of Mary's present residence.

Life with the Graftons passed soberly along. Letters from Mary were eagerly looked for and read. She was making progress, she wrote, and although her situation was not altogether what she would have chosen, still she made no complaint, spoke eagerly of the pleasure she hoped for, when permitted to return, and desired them to dismiss all anxious fears regarding herself.

John Busteed had gone to Topeka. He was said to be attending the commercial college there, but vain rumors from time to time reached Plainville of riotous doings and sundry escapades at Kansas City and elsewhere, which were received much as a matter of course. His father was not a man to talk much of his affairs, but expressions from him at different times were reported, from which it was gathered that the son was causing his father to expend what were considered large sums in his maintainance.

One day Mrs. Jones, a neighbor of the Graftons, "ran in" for a little visit; to talk, as she said, "just a minute."

"I thought I ought to tell you," she said, "what they are saying about Mary. John Busteed has writ home that she aint

going to that fine school at all, that she is just a working out; says she is just a hired girl there. Says he is acquainted with some of the girls that goes there, and they are high-flyers too, I guess, if all I hear is true. You see my boy Dick got it from Ben Thompson, up to town, and John writes to him telling him what fine times he's a having. He says he goes to the play about every night and he can go with the best of 'em. I don't believe it of course, but some of the things they hint about is just awful. He says that the girls gets permission to go to visit friends in the city, after school hours, and then don't go, you know, but go off for buggy rides and to the theatre and dear knows what all. I thought I ought to tell you, you was always so careful about Mary and so particular. And John says that money and fine clothes is all any of 'em cares for and that enough of them will carry any fellow through, if he is careful to keep straight in the right places. You see John's father give him letters when he went away to some of the big bugs he knows up there, and that gives him a chance to get to their houses and he says he knows when to put on the right kind of a face. Says he goes to church, some of the time, nice as a pin, and he writ something about Mary, too. I thought I ought to tell you."

CHAPTER VII.—LIFE'S TRIALS.

MRS. Jones was a clever, good-hearted soul and really intended to do the Graftons a favor by repeating the stories in circulation, which she had heard; still Mrs. Grafton could not listen to the vulgar and scandalous tales without a feeling of personal injury arising within her breast. Mary's name, her daughter's name, had been lightly used and although the closest inquiry failed to draw out any direct charge against her fair name or standing at school, yet the poisonous breath of suspicion had been suffered to fall upon her, and this was

enough to awaken in the mind of the mother an unrest to which she had heretofore been a stranger. Mary had been reared and most carefully nurtured at home, her every thought and wish as open as the day; her mother had been her constant companion and between the two had grown up that perfect confidence which the wise mother has found to be a source of control unequalled. Mrs. Grafton had felt that her daughter's every thought was known to her and in this knowledge she had trusted. Mary was safe; she knew it must be so, and yet—and yet. Ah! the anguish of doubt. What should she do?

Whoever has in youth been religiously instructed, turns for help in moments of distress to that great Hope within the veil. Years may pass and creeds decay. Philosophy may teach and have her claims allowed. Doubt and deceit may have done their work; and yet in the supreme moments of life, the spirit of man rises by a demand of its own nature, instinctively to its source.

Thus was it with Mrs. Grafton; after her kind-hearted but garrulous neighbor had taken her departure, she walked from room to room and back again in the little cottage, and all the thought that formed itself in her mind was: "God help us, God help us."

Presently she became calmer and realizing that active exertion was, under the circumstances, best for her, she hurriedly began the preparations for the evening meal.

Mr. Grafton was engaged in moving a fence from one location to another upon the farm, and as the weather was mild little Charlie was with him, riding upon the wagon from one point to another. Mr. Grafton liked to have the little fellow with him; and talked to him as though he was equally interested with himself in the progress of the work in hand. And indeed he was, at least Charlie felt himself to be of great importance. Didn't he hold the

horses while his father was loading up, and did he not drive one load almost all the way alone?

But now the work of the day was done and Mrs. Grafton saw them drive into the yard, near the stable. Mr. Grafton remained to care for the team, but Charlie came running in, eager to tell his mother of his efficiency in helping his father with the work.

"O mother, we got it all over," said he.

Mrs. Grafton replied cheerfully, but very soberly, to the little fellow. Child-like he instantly divined that something was wrong.

"Mamma," said he looking sharply at her, "you have been crying."

"No," said she, rather doubtfully, "I don't think I have cried any."

"I guess you have," said the child, "for your eyes are just as shiny as they can be."

Mrs. Grafton caught the little fellow in her arms and pressed him to her heart. Giving him a kiss she said: "Now go and tell papa supper is most ready."

Seated at the table Mrs. Grafton told her husband what Mrs. Jones had said. His countenance fell and the dark lines which at times disfigured his face were plainly apparent.

"Is everything turning against us?" said he.

Mrs. Grafton had had time for reflection and was now disposed to look more composedly upon the matter than at first.

"Why, no indeed, 'George,' said she "we haven't heard a word from Mary, you know, and so we can say that we know nothing that should trouble us."

"That's just it," said he, "we don't know anything about what may be going on at Topeka and that's what we ought to know. You ought to go at once and see Mary and I haven't a dollar to send you with."

"I know it, George, but I have been thinking the matter over and my confidence in Mary is not yet weakened. She will not deceive us; and if we write she

will answer and answer truthfully. I should like to go, but that with us is not to be thought of, still I feel confident it is all for the best. Don't you know how Mary promised you when she went away to do nothing which she knew we would not approve? Surely you have not lost faith in her so soon."

"No," said he, "I haven't, but in the life of a young girl these things are so terribly important that one can't help feeling anxious. Well, we must write at once and tell her all that is being said and of our anxiety and ask her to tell us all about affairs at the Institute. It is all we can do. Poverty holds us as in a vise."

Supper ended, Mr. Grafton went out at once to do the usual evening work upon the farm. Hurrying through this he came at once into the house and sat down to write. A long letter was soon finished and saddling a horse he went at once to Plainville that the letter might go upon the early morning train. The town was but a few miles away and yet it was very late when he returned.

Three weary days of waiting passed, and then a letter came from Mary. Mr. Grafton returned late in the evening, his wife met him at the door. "Did you get it?" she asked.

"Yes," he said, "it's all right, I read it on the way home."

Mrs. Grafton took the letter and at once sat down to read; an extract from the letter was as follows:

"How sorry I am for you; for from your letter I see that you have suffered. How could you fear that I would not tell you all? I have now been here nearly three months and during all that time, with the exception of Sundays, when I have gone to church, I have been absent from the house but twice and then in company with Mrs. McFarland, who seems to have taken quite a fancy to me. Some of the young ladies here are disposed to be quite wild, but they certainly are not disposed to re-

gard me as belonging to their set, indeed they scarcely speak to me when we meet, and we have nothing in common. John Busted I have never seen. He could not come here and if he meets any inmates of this school it is in the city and not here."

The letter was long and contained many expressions of love, many inquiries regarding home affairs, told of her progress in her studies and ended with the injunction not to worry regarding herself. Enclosed in the same envelope was a note from Mrs. McFarland to Mrs. Grafton congratulating her upon the possession of so good a daughter and assuring her that she need give herself no uneasiness regarding Mary's conduct.

The hearts of the little family were lightened, the load of anxiety removed and again they could look forward with hope and confidence to a future which somehow and in some way must prove brighter than their present life.

As the holidays approached, the absence of the light of their home was deeply felt at the Grafton cottage. At the Institute there was a short vacation of two weeks and Mary could be spared, but although the expense of a visit was comparatively small, it was more than the impoverished resources of the family would allow. She must remain. Mrs. McFarland was kind but very exacting. She would pay Mary a few dollars for work during the intermission. Small as was the amount it was needed, and wiping away the tears which would come, Mary resolutely applied herself to her tasks.

The Winter passed slowly away. Upon a prairie farm it is impossible for a farmer to profitably employ himself, except in feeding or fattening animals, and with most it is simply a period of expense and weary waiting for the opening of a new season. Without the capital necessary to engage in stock raising, the business of cropping is almost of a certainty a failure. Mr. Grafton had only barely escaped financial ruin

the previous season, and now that another year had dawned and another Spring begun, he saw only a repetition of the past in store for the future. His affairs were not in quite so good trim as they had been the previous year. Some losses had occurred, slight in themselves, yet to him they proved quite serious. Almost without money, a few dollars must be sent to the dear girl so bravely and patiently struggling against the social slights and ostracism of her position, in the hope of a better and brighter day.

As the Spring advanced, poor old Jim, the faithful horse who, like his master, had struggled on, honestly endeavoring to meet the demands upon his time and strength, but unlike him, without hope in the future, suddenly fell sick and it was plain that his days of service were over. Mr. Grafton did what he could, summoned a kind-hearted neighbor, who was supposed to be wise in horse flesh, to his assistance, but the wise man shook his head. "It's no use," he said, "you can't do anything for him; it's a bad case of lung fever and in his enfeebled condition and considering his age, he'll die."

But Grafton would not have it so. "He has done his best for me," he said. "He never failed me and at least he shall not lack for care."

The neighbor took his departure, but Mr. Grafton went at once to work. Mrs. Grafton put the wash boiler upon the kitchen stove, water was heated and together they watched and worked through the livelong night. As the light began to show in the east the faithful beast stretched himself upon the stable floor and with a parting struggle, was gone.

"He is dead," said Mr. Grafton, and as he spoke, the tears which he had endeavored to hold in check refused longer to be controlled. Mrs. Grafton wept aloud. "To think," said she, "that the poor faithful fellow never can have any remuneration for all his toil for us is too bad—too

bad. Life is so hard—so ruthless and so cruel."

Spring found the Graftons compelled to practice the closest and most pinching economy to provide even for the daily returning wants of the body. To add to the gravity of their situation the payment of the interest on the mortgage upon the farm, which had been deferred, was now demanded. The agent of the loan company at the county seat, wrote that the company had instructed him to make a collection at once of all amounts due and that no further time would be given.

In consultation with his wife Mr. Grafton had almost determined to give up the effort to retain the farm. He felt that without a great change in his affairs took place he must shortly be compelled to do so and the thought occurred to him that he might be able to make an arrangement with some one who would be willing to take the farm subject to the mortgage.

Mrs. Grafton was loath to give it up and yet she could offer no plan which seemed likely to succeed in holding it. "If we give it up where shall we go and what shall we do?" said she.

CHAPTER VIII.—BRANCHTON.

THAT something must be done was plain. Money must be had and payments made, and it was finally decided, after much careful thought, that the better course would be for Mr. Grafton to go to Branchton, the county seat, which was distant some thirty miles, and ascertain what could be done; it being plain that either the farm must be given up or more money raised upon it.

The farm upon which the Graftons lived consisted of a quarter section, or one hundred and sixty acres of good land. The house was a small and inexpensive cottage, the stables and other out-buildings scarcely worthy the name, being cheap structures intended at the time of construction as only temporary make-shifts, which might

answer until better could be erected. As is usual under such circumstances, however, it had been found impossible to replace them, and they had been patched and mended from year to year with a new board here and there, slight additions made and changes effected, with but little substantial improvement. The farm was an average Kansas homestead and was valued at some three or four thousand dollars. Upon this there was a mortgage of one thousand. This having been placed some years before the opening of our story, bore interest at the rate of ten per cent per annum, and called for an annual tribute of one hundred dollars. Mr. Grafton had been told that he could secure a larger loan upon the farm, by agents of the different loan companies, but he well knew that if he found it impossible to pay the one he now carried, that to add to the burden made it certain that the farm must be given up. But now necessity forced him to immediate action. Either the farm must be sold or a new and larger loan secured. It was impossible otherwise to pay the interest upon the mortgage now long over due.

Bright and early one morning Mr. Grafton harnessed his horses to the farm wagon and placing therein feed for his team, a couple of loaves of bread and some boiled ham for himself with blankets for his bed, drove slowly down the lane and out upon the highway towards Branchton. As he turned for a last look at the place he called home, he saw his wife and little boy watching him from where they stood, just outside and near the corner of the house. He waved a hasty adieu and the next instant an intervening tree shut off the view and he was alone. As he drove slowly along his reflections were strangely mixed. Must he lose the farm? And what then? He was not likely to have enough left to enable him to engage in business of any kind and although he felt himself competent to act as clerk or assistant, still he felt that

almost without exception employers desired young men and disliked to employ middle-aged or old men as assistants. Just what could be done he could not say; the future was not encouraging, and yet when he contrasted his position with that of others he felt cause for thankfulness. How happy was his home, was ever man more blessed than he? Something must happen to his advantage he felt sure.

It is only the made up stories that end with everybody happy and contented. The comedy of errors which we call life ends with the tragedy of death; disguise it as we may, the grave is the goal which all are certain to reach, and the author who would sketch the happenings of actual residents upon this earth, without other motive than to set down the realities of existence, must content himself with a recital of many things which he could wish were not true.

Thirty miles is a fair day's travel for a farmer's heavy team and it was late in the afternoon as Mr. Grafton rode into Branchton. As he drove up to a stable, a man came out and accosted him with, "Want to stop?"

"Yes, I guess so," said Mr. Grafton. "What do you charge for a pair of horses to hay?"

"Fifty cents a day, you care for your own team."

"And a chance to sleep in the hay?" said the farmer.

"Oh yes, they mostly do," said the man. "If you are going to stop, drive into the wagon yard, I'll open the gate," and suiting the action to the word he swung open the heavy gate and Mr. Grafton drove into the enclosure where a number of farm wagons had already preceded him. Unharnessing his team he led them to the trough in the yard, gave his horses what water they wanted and placed them in the stalls which the hostler pointed out. When he had fed and cared for the team, washed at the pump in the stable yard and eaten of some of the bread and meat in the

wagon the day was spent and evening approached. The streets were brilliantly lighted and invited him forth. Giving a parting look at his horses, he saw that each had eaten his corn and was busily engaged in munching hay. "There, old fellows," said he, "I guess you are all right and I'll take a turn through the town."

Sauntering carelessly down the street, jostled by people of all classes and conditions, he could not but wonder at the eager air pervading the whole. Each seemed intent on something important; even the little knot of men gathered about the story teller at the corner were anxious and expectant, awaiting the *denouement* supposed to lie hidden at the end. The minds of all appeared occupied with the happenings or business of the moment; reflection there was none. All were influenced and moved upon by the doings of others, and although to Grafton this had been a familiar sight in years gone by, yet as he had now been for a number of years comparatively secluded, living as he did upon a farm, the difference in manner of thought and life between the farmer and the townsman was the more forcibly impressed upon him. The saying of the wise man came again with added force: "Iron sharpeneth iron, so a wise man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." Yes, that was true, but was it best for the man? Was man a mere human fox whose sole aim in life was compassed by the effort to obtain advantage which other foxes should repel?

As he wandered down the street his ears were saluted by the sound of a drum in the distance; as he approached he found that a detachment of the despised Salvation Army were conducting a service upon the street. A crowd surrounded them composed of all kinds of people. The leader was exhorting all to flee from what she described as the wrath to come. With earnest and somewhat incoherent words she appealed to her hearers. All listened respectfully. She told of nothing new;

no charm of manner invested her words with power; evidently she was uneducated and in personal presence inferior, and yet hundreds hung upon her speech. Why was it? Grafton was not what is termed a religious man, he did not believe the iron-bound creed which she appeared to teach and yet he felt the power of her earnest utterances. What was it that attracted him? Ah, thought he, these people own the bond of human brotherhood; no desire for gain influences their action; despised and rejected of men they yet seek to serve.

Deep down in the nature of every man there exists a chord of sympathy, which responds to the slightest manifestation of genuine interest in his welfare. All own its power. It exists; the heart of man does beat in sympathy with that of his fellow and upon this hangs the hope of humanity. And this bond of brotherhood, of sympathy, depends upon no external aid. It is not the creature of custom or of man made, or priestly law; it is a natural force inherent in the nature of man and beast. Cattle herding upon the open plain, join in defense; even hogs do the same when summoned by the cries of a fellow. A crowd of men will not see a weakling abused at the hands of a stronger, and wrong, fully exposed is half cured.

By means of the printed page, the public press and that inter-communication, which in our day is constantly increasing, men are brought more and more into the relations of brotherhood, their wants and wishes made known and that community of feeling produced which is slowly revolutionizing the world and which will continue to operate with added and increasing force until the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of righteousness, justice and peace.

The Salvationists took up their line of march, singing as they went, a boisterous song, but one remove from the ridiculous. Grafton turned away and sought the stable; looking in upon his faithful friends

and finding them still contentedly eating their hay, he got his blankets from the wagon and ascended to the hay loft; stepping over first one and then another, who had already composed themselves for the night, he wrapped himself in the blankets as best he could and was soon lost in sleep.

Early the next morning he was astir and attending to the wants of his team. A hasty toilet at the pump, more bread and meat from the wagon and he was ready for the business of the day. As soon as the office of the loan agent was opened for business, he was there. Having a slight acquaintance with Mr. James, the agent, that gentleman accosted him with, "Hello, Grafton, got my note, did you?"

"Yes, I received the notice and have come for the purpose of making some arrangement."

"Ready to pay the interest?"

"No," said he, "I am unable to pay it to-day."

"Well, what are you going to do about it? You know my orders were peremptory."

"I suppose," said Mr. Grafton, "that if nothing else could be done, that a new and larger loan might be made?"

"Yes, and unless you have the money I expect that will be the only way you can do."

"I would sell the farm if I could get anything near what it was worth," said Mr. Grafton rather ruefully.

"Well, now that's the thing you just can't do," said Mr. James very positively.

"No sale for land, eh?"

"O, Lord no, ain't been a regular bona fide sale on a farm I don't know the day when."

"Why I occasionally see notices of transfers in the county papers," said the farmer.

"Oh, well, you know how that is, I s'pose. They are just turned over, same as if you had already got as heavy a mortgage as could be placed on your farm and couldn't pay the interest, then sometimes the company, to save expense of foreclosing, gives the holder a trifle to make clear title, but you are in pretty fair shape

to what a great many are. I can get you sixteen and maybe eighteen hundred on your place, then you can pay off the old mortgage and have something left."

"My farm is worth near four thousand dollars."

"Yes, if you could get it."

"What's the reason I can't get somewhere near what it's worth?"

"When so many are being transferred at about the face of the mortgage what would be the need of a buyer paying more? You see money is so blamed scarce that men can't get it to meet obligations. That brings everything right down to bed rock."

"Then there is no way of obtaining money except by borrowing at high rates of interest? Grain doesn't really bring as much as it costs to raise it."

"That's about the only show for money and grain brings no more because the demand is light; there's too much of it raised."

CHAPTER IX.—THE LAWYER.

"**H**OW can there be too much wheat raised, when the price of flour remains so high and so many in all the large cities lack bread?" said Grafton.

"Oh well, I'm not going to get into a discussion with you on political economy. I know well enough that morally speaking, something is out of joint but I'm no reformer. My business is to make a living and something over, and whatever passes current in a business way is good enough for me; I can't change the general run of things, if I was to die for it. So I've pretty much concluded to let'm slide, and if business in general is run on a wrong basis, why I'm not to blame for it."

"Who is to blame?"

"O everybody I reckon; and as what is everybody's business is nobody's, nobody feels specially concerned."

"Now, Mr. James," said the farmer, "you are a practical man, a shrewd man, and a lawyer, and have often, no doubt,

considered the fact that those who produce the wealth of the world get but a small share of it; that in fact as things go, the man who honestly spends his life in producing the real wealth of the world, stands no chance of retaining in his own hands more than a very small share of what is rightfully his. Schemes and plans of one sort and another, mostly under the protection of law, take from him here a slice and there a portion, until he is only allowed to retain, after all exchanges are made, barely enough to live upon and, as you know, while the original producer of all values, the laborer, is by means of invention and improvement, annually producing more and more of the good things of life the amount taken from each producer is increasing in a far greater ratio. Now what I want to ask you is not whether you think all this morally right—for you agree that it cannot be—but whether you think there is absolutely no remedy?"

"That's a mighty big question?"

"Yes I know it, but I want to know what you think."

"Well if the present manner of doing the business of the world is wrong, there ought to be a remedy, hadn't there?"

"Yes."

"Well I am an optimist, I believe in the final triumph of right."

"Then you do not believe that there can be a wrong without a remedy?"

"See here Grafton, it occurs to me that you are getting me into an argument after all."

"Oh well, it's early and you have no other customer just now and as you are a man of affairs and a keen business man, I would just like to know what you think on this question," said Mr. Grafton.

"Question? why you are pulling the whole cook shop on me; capital and labor, God and mammon."

"No, I simply ask you whether in your judgment there is any remedy for a condition of affairs which you acknowledge

does not square with equal and exact justice to man."

"Well Grafton, I can tell you this, that there is not the slightest chance in God's world for any improvement until what we call the upper classes get woke up and move in this matter. Mankind is moved from above. Mental force and improvement operates from above downward. It don't go the other way. I expect you look on the laborer and producer as practically enslaved, and in a certain sense he is, for whoever is in a position where the profits of his labor are taken from him, is the slave of the parties who get the benefit of his labors. Really that is the essence of slavery to have the profits of your labor taken from you without your being able to help yourself. Suppose we admit that the producer of all values, the laborer, is a slave; now I just want to tell you that since the beginning of the world slaves never have freed themselves and they never will. There is only one instance where they are said to have done it, and the evidence on that is all *ex parte*; it's just their account of it. The Hebrews got away from Pharoah and the Egyptians, borrowed all their jewelry, stole right and left and decamped—run away. I don't know much about that case; they say God helped them, sent them dry shod through the Red Sea and drowned the Egyptians who pursued. I don't know much about that, but if God actually performed miracles and set aside the laws of nature for their benefit, that's all right, they had to win, but it is safe to say that no other set of toilers will free themselves until more miracles are performed. I'm not looking for anything of that sort and I don't believe you are. You've read history. You know how that goes. There's no instance to the contrary. Slaves, toilers, laborers, have never freed themselves where it was to the interests of the masters to retain their hold. The French revolution is the only instance where the lower classes ever

got the upper hand, and that was only an insurrection. It was soon put down and they gladly welcomed an emperor who used the whole French nation as a plaything. Now Grafton, I expect you've an idea that the working people of this country, because they have a majority in numbers and the right to vote, are going to free themselves from what you call the exactions of capital. Well now, they'll never do it, and yet I don't say that they oughtn't to."

"You haven't answered my question yet," said Grafton, "you admit the wrong; is there a remedy?"

"Why, I told you that I thought that finally there would be."

"Well, what is it?"

"Why of course I can only give you my opinion; I am sure though, that the laborer can never lift himself; that some power exterior to himself must do it, if it is ever done."

"Is there any power that will do it?"

"Yes, I think there is. Public opinion, the general average judgment of society, is such a power, it really governs us and if I mistake not this power is being exerted in the direction of a change, but it proceeds entirely from what are sometimes called the upper classes, the thinkers, the educators. What the laborer himself thinks exerts no appreciable influence upon the mass of society. As long as the preachers tell people that the powers that be are ordained of God; that they must not resist evil and that they must bear all things, hoping for a reward in another world, there'll be no change in present methods. The churches form the great bulwark of the present system and for the most part they pay a good deal of attention to the heaviest paying pews. But these questions, although as old as man, are comparatively new to the mass of thinkers in this country, still I think I can see a change taking place."

"Now I have answered your questions,

what are you going to do about the mortgage?"

"It seems that there is no other course open to me, except to make a new one," said the farmer.

"No, that's all. It will take a few days to get the business fixed up and you just sign an application for a loan now and you and your wife come up in about a week and make out the mortgage and I will have everything all straight. I will try and get you eighteen hundred on it. I know the place well and can get the two appraisers necessary right here in town. It is possible that I can't get but sixteen on it, but you sign an application for eighteen and I'll to the best I can for you."

"I need some money to-day," said the farmer rather regretfully, "and did not know but what I might borrow it."

"How much do you want?"

"I ought to have about fifty dollars. I brought up my wagon and need to take some things back."

"Well," said the lawyer, "you just sign this application and I can get it for you. We will make out the note for the fifty dollars, on thirty days, and I expect the discount will be about two dollars."

"Why James, that will be at the rate of four per cent per month, and I only want it for a week, you know," said Grafton.

"Yes I know, but that's about the only way you'll get the money; that public opinion we were talking about, hasn't had a great deal of effect on the loaning of money yet."

Seeing that nothing else could be done, Mr. Grafton signed the application, obtained the money and began making his little purchases preparatory to leaving for home.

As the evening shadows began to appear, Mrs. Grafton and Charlie began to look for the return of the absent one.

"I know he will come soon, Charlie, he told us he wouldn't be gone but one night," said Mrs. Grafton.

Charlie was constantly running out to the "big road" to look, and no sooner did he return from one of these expeditions than he was seized with a desire to go again. "Maybe I could see him now, if I was there," he said.

Mrs. Grafton could see Charlie from the house as he stood at the roadside looking anxiously into the distance, and at last as he seemed intent upon something, she called to him.

"Do you see him, Charlie?"

"Somebody is tumming," said he. "I can't see if it is him."

Mrs. Grafton could resist no longer and joined her child at the roadside. A wagon was approaching but the fading light of the Summer evening prevented them from determining whether it was the one they looked for or not.

"Listen," said the mother, "I believe that is our wagon, I can tell the rattle of its wheels."

Reassured by the sound, Mrs. Grafton took the hand of her child and together they approached the slowly moving team. Mr. Grafton saw them and called out pleasantly: "Couldn't you wait any longer?"

"Oh mamma, it's him," said Charlie, "let's run," and tugging at his mother's hand he actually induced her to run the few steps which intervened between them and the returning husband and father.

The wagon was stopped, and although it was but a short distance to the house, both climbed up into the rough wagon beside the driver.

"Why, Emily," said Mr. Grafton, as he put his arm around her, "I believe you are glad to see me."

"O," said she, "you men know nothing of the lonesome weary times that come so often to a woman upon a farm. So many women spend their lives in waiting, hoping, trusting. Work is their only relief."

"Ah, you are downhearted again; you have health and the love of your family; just think of our Mary; perhaps she will

be famous some day, who knows; there isn't such another girl in the world—for us."

The horses had now drawn the wagon in front of the little stable and come to a halt. Charlie clambered out and called to his father:

"Papa, we've got home."

But the occupants of the wagon, for the moment, showed no disposition to alight.

It is a little remarkable that the tender passion which forms the staple of most works of fiction, appears to the average reader as respectable and interesting only when it concerns the loves of men and maids. The supposition that husbands and wives may and do love each other, is, of course, admissible in print, but strange as it may seem, when the lover's tender wooings have resulted in matrimony, sentiment appears to have received a most fatal wound in the house of its friends, and the writer who should so far forget himself and his readers as to devote space to the love of husband and wife, would most surely be considered as having violated all the properties at once. And yet who for a moment believes that the sincere affection of youth strengthened by confidence and trust which has not been misplaced, is inferior to the vaporings of deceptive passion? The man and woman who have a common interest in a little grave upon the wind swept prairie, have in that unutterable sorrow, a bond far stronger than all the whispered nothings ever uttered by man or listened to by maid.

CHAPTER X.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

DICKEY JONES was in town and brought me out a letter from Mary," said Mrs. Grafton; "you shall see it when you go in. She says that Mrs. McFarland had sent her a few times to take her place as teacher of one of the lower classes among the 'day scholars,' and that she had begun to feel as though she had made one step toward a somewhat better position, when some of the parents of

the little gir's complained to Dr. McFarland that they did not send their children to the Institute to be taught by a 'hired girl' and that if a change was not made they should take their daughters from the school."

"Human nature has some awful mean streaks, hasn't it," said Mr. Grafton. "Now just think of our poor Mary struggling against the social slights which mean so much to a young girl; working hard in the kitchen, that she may have an opportunity to do something more to her taste in the future, and then when the door appears to be opened, only a trifle, to have those people so eager to close it again in her face. It couldn't have been that they found any fault with her teaching, for she was fully prepared to teach a primary class long ago, and then she has one of the sweetest dispositions in the world and her desire to teach would have made her exert herself to please her little scholars. The only reason was that some of the pupils knew that Mary had been employed in the kitchen. But that was enough. Life is a fight, even for a girl. Animals all join in keeping the underlings down, and human nature differs but little from brute nature. And so Mary was relieved of the responsibility of teaching I suppose?"

"Yes, Mrs. McFarland told Mary all about it and really seemed to feel badly for her, and she said too that those people were very foolish; for, for the little girls, Mary was a much better teacher than she would have been herself; that Mary had more patience with them and was better adapted to teaching."

"The Summer vacation is at hand and Mary must come home, for a visit, at any rate," said Mr. Grafton.

"Why, can we afford it, do you think?"

"No, indeed, we can't afford anything, but we must have her come whether we can or not. We have got to give up the farm sooner or later and I am in for cutting the thing short. In fact all we can do

is to mortgage the place for all we can get, sell off stock and crops and—."

"And what then?" said Mrs. Grafton.

"O, I don't know what, but that much is clear, for we can't continue to raise crops and sell them for less than it costs to raise them. They were only talking of paying ten cents a bushel for new oats, up at Branchton, and it will cost anybody eighteen to grow them, if all the items of expense are counted up."

"All that may be true," said Mrs. Grafton regretfully. "but I can't bear the thoughts of giving up this farm just as the trees which we have planted begin to make it look so home-like and so pretty."

"Well, mother, we can't settle everything by sitting here in the wagon all night. Charlie has almost got the horses loose from the wagon; poor fellows they are tired; they are not used to the road and thirty miles have in them a good many steps."

A few days later found the Graftons in Branchton; Mrs. Grafton came along to sign the mortgage, and Charlie because he could not be left. Driving up to a boarding house, or second rate hotel, Mrs. Grafton was left, but Charlie would go with his father to the stable, that he might see as much of the town as possible,

Mr. James' office was soon reached; that gentleman was in.

"Hello, Grafton," said he, "come back for another lecture?"

"No, I came on other business, but I'm always ready to talk to a man from whom I can hope to gain any information."

"Well, according to the best of my recollection you got me to talking pretty lively when you were here last; fact is I don't believe that I ever spoke out quite so plain before. But then what I said is all true enough."

"You are surprised that you told the truth? Is that it?" said Grafton laughing.

"O well, it isn't usual for men to say just what they think, you know."

"Then men usually say what they don't think, eh?"

"At it again, I see," said the lawyer. "But then you know as well as any man that men generally are a set of dead moral cowards. Plenty of fellows that will fight you at the drop of a hat, that don't dare avow an opinion that hasn't been approved by public sentiment. They say that the voice of the people is the voice of God! Nonsense! You can see that it hasn't been, through the most of the world's history. It chose Barabbas, rather than Christ, long ago, and has kept it up ever since; kept on killing its Christs and elevating its Barabbases. History is only a record of wars, and the men most honored have always been the greatest robbers and murderers. And that is public opinion! That is what rules us now and that is the sort of stuff we are told is the voice of God! The truth is public opinion is made; it's manufactured, and it always has been, and never was it more under the control of the ruling power than to-day. The great newspapers of the day make public opinion. You know that, and you probably suspect that they advocate what they do for pecuniary reasons, only you don't suspect it half hard enough. It is all done for pay, in some way or other. Of course there are slight exceptions to this, like THE WESTERN RURAL, and their influence is being felt, but it is up-hill work. Now that's the way public opinion is made, you know it—and then to say that the voice of the majority, made in this way, is entitled to respect is too funny." And the lawyer laughed with a hard metallic sound.

"Say, Grafton," said he, "I don't know what makes me talk so freely to you, unless it's because I know, or think I do, your opinion and feel like shocking you. Some influence appears to make me talk anyhow."

"You say that public opinion is controlled by the 'ruling power,'" said Gratton, "and when I was here before you told

me, if I remember right, that the churches formed the main support of the present order of things."

"Oh, well you see there's a power behind that throne greater than the throne itself. Mammon is the god that is really worshiped. Not by all; some of the old maid members of the church are pure gold; they live right up to preaching, but the most of them keep the Jesus they really worship right down in their breeches pocket; or they wish they had him there."

"Look here, James," said the farmer, warmly, "you are a little too fast and too bitter. You are allowing your feeling against some deacon or other, to run away with your judgment and your memory. Now I am pretty confident that when we had our talk the other day that you admitted that there was a remedy for present economic troubles, in public opinion, and that public opinion is changing for the better; now you berate public opinion, tell how it is made and say it isn't worth minding."

"I suppose you think you have me on the hip now," said the lawyer mockingly, "but both views are right and both are entirely reconcilable. In the laws of nature we see force everywhere triumphant, there is no pity and no morality. The survival of the fittest is the rule. Cunning and strength succeed in the natural world and in all the operations of nature, now as they always have. The pig that steals the most swill becomes the best hog and the progenitor of the future herd. The plant that crowds other plants out of existence occupies the ground. Morally, all this appears to be wrong and reprehensible to the last degree, but it is the way of the world. Still, running through all the course of nature we can see that there has been an enormous advance. The remains of prehistoric plants and animals when compared with those which exist to-day are only remarkable for their size and hideousness. We see that through the untold myriads of years which have elapsed, that although

selfishness and disregard of the rights of other organizations has prevailed, to the utter exclusion of what we regard as justice, still, some principle which is above and beyond our grasp has secured an advance. There has been a steady upward movement. The world in which we live has improved, and is improving. True, great periods of time are necessary in order to note great advances, but they have been made. The means used—complete selfishness on the part of all organizations engaged in the struggle, and utter disregard of the questions of right, judged by the moral standard—can only excite our aversion and contempt, and yet we see that through it all, there has been in operation a power which has controlled everything and for good. There is something which man has not been able to measure, or weigh, or understand and that something includes a design which is being advanced and yet that advance is being secured by the use of what must seem to us, the most horrible and cruel means.

"Well, now it is just so in mental advancement; in the life of men. The most horrible things take place; things which we cry out against, which we ought to cry out against and yet we see that these very things which excite our horror or our disgust finally are controlled for the advancement of the race.

"The Jews crucified Christ; without this there could have been no Christian religion. It was necessary. Public opinion sanctioned it. Public opinion brought it about, and this very public opinion was wrong then, as for the most part it always has been wrong, and yet it was a necessary agent in the transaction, although it was on the wrong side. The power of public opinion induces change, mostly from wrong motives and should be withstood by the conscientious, and yet we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a power which we cannot control, which is above and beyond the power of man to control,

and this power is pushing the race onward and upward in the course of life."

"There, I haven't been talking but a few minutes only,"—taking out his watch—"a few minutes and yet I have given you a pretty good dose. I suppose you've come up on that mortgage business. Say, Grafton, you are a good listener."

"I am always interested to hear a man talk, when he is saying what he really believes. Yes, I came on the mortgage business."

"Well, I couldn't get you but sixteen hundred on your place."

"Well, I left the matter in your hands entirely. Really I couldn't do otherwise."

"All right, I suppose your wife is here. I see you have the baby with you. Well, you bring her around and we will fix up the papers."

Grafton soon returned with his wife, she was introduced to the lawyer, signed her name mechanically and with Charlie returned to the hotel.

"That makes it all snug, Grafton; I shan't charge you anything for the appraisers although it's usual to do so. I know they didn't have to go out to the farm, but it is usual to charge all the same. Now let's see—beginning to figure on the table—there is the face of the mortgage that's \$1,600. Then out of that will come the old mortgage of \$1,000, then there was \$100 of interest long past due, I'll have to charge you two per cent per month on that; money is worth that now; it was due four months ago making \$8. Then I'll have to charge you \$25 for releasing the old mortgage. Then the interest for one year in advance, that at nine per cent will be \$144. Fixing up the abstract of title will be \$5 more. Then the note for \$50, will make a total of \$1,332. Take that from \$1,600 and we have \$268. Run my figures over, Grafton, and see if I am right."

"I have," said he; "if all the items have to go in the figuring is correct."

"All the items go in? Of course they

do. I didn't charge you for appraising, that's usually quite an item."

"The item of \$25 for release of the old mortgage is all right, is it?"

"Of course."

"Who gets that?"

"Why, I am the agent of the company, you know."

"Yes, I know; but does the company get that?"

"That's the usual charge, Grafton. I have done this business on the square and made no unusual charge."

"I expect that's true," said the farmer, "anybody in your line would have done the same. Make out your check for the money and we will close up the trade."

Taking his check Grafton walked out of the office and down the street; coming to that portion of the street where the farmers' wagons bringing wheat usually stood waiting for a buyer, curiosity induced him to examine the quality of the wheat and hear the price offered by the buyers. Among the sellers was an old German farmer, who could speak but little English; his wheat had among it traces of a worm which sometimes fastens itself upon wheat in the open bins of the country where it has become wet. It is not of much damage to wheat as it can only attack that which has been softened. A few grains of the German's load only had been affected, and yet the buyer was expatiating loudly on the damage this particular load would do if it were placed in the elevator with other wheat. He wouldn't have it in his elevator for one hundred dollars. He had a feed mill however, in connection with his other business and could grind the stuff for feed and would give twenty cents a bushel for it, the price of good wheat being sixty cents.

The old German seemed dazed and hardly knew what to do. As the buyer stepped away for a moment a friend came up and said: "Two blocks away there is a man who has a fanning mill; drive your

wheat down there; put it through the fanning mill; you can have my wagon to use long enough for that; get a friend to drive it up here and he can sell your wheat for sixty cents."

The German nodded and drove away.

As Grafton was leaving town sometime after, he went through the same street and happened along just as the old German, having made the exchange of wagons and sold his wheat, was now on his way home.

"Who bought your wheat?" said the buyer to the old man.

"You did," said he, in broken English, "we put it in another wagon and cleaned it up and you gave sixty cents for it."

The man was furious with rage. To "beat a granger" was great fun, but to have a "granger" succeed in getting an advantage over him was so great a departure from the usual way that he scarcely knew what to say.

As usual, however, when nothing else can be thought of, oaths come handy to the average man and these poured forth. The old German smiled peacefully and whipping up his horses was soon out of sight.

The Graftons had an acquaintance who lived a few miles out of Branchton, on the road to Plainville and as it was now quite late in the afternoon they resolved to make him a visit and stay over night, going home in the morning.

"Uncle" Jabez Smith was a man of marked force of character, who, although of genial manner and happy disposition still contrived to make whoever spent any time in his company feel that he "had views" which he considered important. The families had been acquainted in Ohio, so when the Graftons drove up to the Smith homestead, they were warmly welcomed. "Uncle" Jabez and "Aunt" Sarah both came out at once, and the old man, the better to show his friendship and the warmth of his welcome, began at once to unhitch the Grafton horses from the wagon.

"Get out, George," said he, "haint seen ye fer' a long time. We can talk everything all over and back agin."

Mrs. Grafton and Charlie soon followed Aunt Sarah into the house, while the "men folks" looked at stock and talked of crops and prospects until it was too dark to see, when an adjournment was had to the house.

"What do you think of the Farmers Alliance, that is taking such a hold, Uncle Jabez?" said Grafton.

"Why it ought to be a good thing, George, it ought to be; the principles is all right, ef they would live up to 'em. But there it is; mebbe they will and mebbe they won't. To judge by what's past the prospect ain't any too enouraging. Smart and designin' men will set the whole carboodle to quarrelin' about some fool thing or other that reely is of no importance at all. Like as not they will all be a wantin' to cut each other's throats about the blame Southern niggers a votin' when their own votes is contracted for, months before election and the goods delivered regular. And the fools don't know enough to know that they are voted by the wire pullers. Why their own votes is always used against their interest right along and then for 'em to be afraid the niggers' votes ain't counted is just too funny. And there ain't one of 'em that dares to vote counter to what the lawyers of his party tells him is the straight thing, and I don't believe there is a single one of them jack leg lawyers, up to town, that can't go into an Alliance meetin' or convention and set 'em to fightin' one another like all rip in one hour's time. Now if it can be done it stands to reason it will be. Farmers has got a heap to learn before they get down to business. Then see how jealous they be. Why if a farmer gets a nomination for some office, his own neighbors will say he is stuck up and like's not, not vote for him. They would rather vote for some lawyer or professional man that can put on some style."

"I know," said Grafton, "that has been the way, but don't you think that they will learn after a while to stand by one another and let the political tricksters alone? It is only a short time since the Grange was first organized and farmers began to think of working together. Of course they would be expected to make mistakes and failures at first. Now you know how it is with a young colt when it first tries to stand. How many times it will throw itself down before it finally makes a success of it. If you saw this tor the first time, and without previous instruction, you would say 'that thing can never stand on those pipe stem legs,' and yet it does, because there is a natural force behind it. Now don't you think that the necessities of the farmer will finally induce him to stand too?"

"Well I'd know," said Uncle Jabez doubtfully, "colts mostly does stand up after tryin' awhile, but farmers and laborers never has yet."

"But in the first settlement of our country, our people were all farmers and they humbled the power of even Great Britain and secured their independence."

"Oh shucks," said Uncle Jabez, "what'd the farmers a done without Patrick Henry, the Adamses, Jefferson, Dr. Franklin, Hamilton, Morris, Paine and the rest of the lawyers, and doctors and preachers that furnished the brain power of the whole thing? Why they never would have made a declaration, let alone a gaining their independence."

"Well, but Uncle Jabez, don't you know there has been a great advance in general education," said Grafton, unwilling to be thus summarily put down, "and the farmer of to-day is away ahead of the farmer of a hundred years ago."

"Well now, don't you fool yourself on that; the advance has not been with the farmer, in fact the farmer has pretty much stood still, and the other classes have all the fruits of victory in their hands. It

will be a heap easier for the big bugs to manage the crowd now than it ever was before. Them revolutionary farmers would a been tolerable hard to manage; they had spunk and stamina and would a held out for an idee. Now-a-days, what with the big newspapers and all the lawyers and means of information in the hands of the farmers' opposers, it'll be just as easy to manage 'em as can be. Why, what every man lives on is his thoughts and when he isn't man enough to have thoughts he has prejudices, and that's more powerful still, and what with the rotten politics of our time and Grand Army sentiment, and hate of the other crowd all completely in the hands of the men that intend to keep the farmer in his place, or worse, why he just ain't got no show; he'll stop where he is until the powers that be want him to rise, and I hain't seen no sign of that yet, have you?"

"I can't help but think," said Grafton, "that you fail to give the rising spirit of independent thought sufficient prominence. I know there is a change in the air."

"Independent thought!" snorted Uncle Jabez. "who's got the independent thought? not the farmers. They don't dare say what they think; fact is, the most of 'em don't think, they just take whatever some shiny coat sees fit to give 'em. Why if an average farmer happened to go up to the county seat with an independent thought in his head, a couple of them court house hangers on would make him so ashamed of it in a five minutes' talk, that he'd go home and the next day be a usin' the same arguments, on his neighbors, that the court house fellers give him. But say, it's time to go to bed and we can't stay up all night a talkin'."

"I expect you miss your daughter, don't ye?" said Uncle Jabez to Mrs. Grafton.

"Yes, indeed. I little thought I should miss her as much as I have. Mary is a good girl and wonderfully thoughtful for one of her age. She was really more of a

companion to me than a daughter. But she is coming home now in a few days, for a visit at any rate."

"I know you will enjoy that," said Aunt Sarah. "A mother's relation to a daughter is wonderfully close. A father seldom sympathizes fully with his son, but most mothers do with their daughters."

It was now quite late and as the desire to converse began to wane, the Graftons were shown to their room and sleep soon possessed the household.

Before the sun rose the following morning the good people were astir. Mrs. Grafton was assisting Aunt Sarah in the preparation of the morning meal and Uncle Jabez had already made Mr. Grafton take an excursion to the "near field" to see a wonderful crop of corn that he was raising after a new method.

Breakfast over, the friends separated with mutual ejaculations of, "come over often now," and "you come over," and "see't you do now."

As the Graftons drove slowly along they began to talk of their situation. They must now leave the farm. There was no longer any hope of retaining it. Mrs. Grafton was depressed at the thought, but but strange as it may seem Mr. Grafton felt relieved. He surely could earn a living, and the farm had been such a struggle to hold and the living it had afforded him lacked all the advantages which he told himself his family ought to enjoy. Surely they would not in future fare worse than they had in the past.

About noon they began to approach their home. As they came in sight of neighbor Jones' house, which they would pass on their way, someone came down the path to the road, as though she would speak with them.

"Why, that can't be Mrs. Jones," said Mrs. Grafton, "I wonder who it is."

"Maybe," said her husband. "it's the school miss."

Charlie had been asleep in the bottom of

the wagon for some time but as they began to near home he had awakened and now at the thought of seeing someone whom he knew, he had roused himself and was looking eagerly at the approaching figure. As she came nearer the sunbonnet was thrown partly back from the face and at the same instant Charlie screamed excitedly:

"It's my sister! It's my sister!"

"It is Mary," said both the parents at once. The ready tears came at once to Mrs. Grafton's eyes; for the moment she was completely overcome. Charlie had clambered out of the wagon, his sister held him in her arms and covered his face with kisses; her face was wreathed with smiles, she laughed excitedly and all the time the tears were freely flowing down her cheeks.

Mr. Grafton alone retained any semblance of self-possession.

"Why, Mary," said he, "how came you here?"

CHAPTER XI.—MARY AT HOME.

"VACATION was announced one week sooner than we had been expecting," said Mary, "and I wanted to give you a surprise, so I came at once. I had carefully saved the money you left me, mother, to pay my fare. I came to Plainville yesterday. Neighbor Jones was in town and I came out with him. Oh dear, I am so glad to see you, and you look so natural, and so good. And how Charlie has grown. My! but you will be a big boy soon and then you won't love me as you do now."

Charlie was very certain that such a result of growth was not to be thought of, while Mary climbed into the farm wagon and was most affectionately welcomed by both father and mother, and as they slowly proceeded on the homeward way, questions were asked and answered almost without number, and mutual expressions of joy in meeting were again and again exchanged.

The parents looked with wonder and ad-

miration upon their daughter. To them she seemed like a dream. Was this the child that but the other day had been delivered into their keeping, whose very beginning had been with them, whose childish prattle still lingered in their ears? Could it be? Were they not dreaming? Their child, so well remembered, was a chubby, little, flaxen-haired midget, with childish ways. This was a woman, whose abundant brown hair and soulful hazel eyes were accompanied by that indefinable something which gave evidence of a mind of high resolve within.

Yes, Mary had come, their daughter was with them now, but for the first time there came over them a realization of the truth of the fatherhood of God; that each soul bears first relation to the great First Cause; that all alike are afloat upon an unknown sea and that existence, fate, destiny and the experiences of life, which make or mar our futures, come to each soul in silence and alone. Form what relationships we may, the I within us must walk alone.

They were soon at home. Mrs. Grafton busied herself with the preparation of the noonday meal. Pleasure beamed in her every look and motion. They were again united; this was their first reunion; how happy they were; how Mary had improved; ah, well, she was now eighteen; it was to be expected that she would have changed somewhat, but she had not expected quite so great a transformation in so short a time. And that glorious creature was her daughter! Why, how strange it seemed. How happy she was. Ah! the good God had been kind to her, she thought.

Mary and Charlie, hand in hand, ran from place to place to look at all the well remembered pets. Would old Shep know her? Indeed he did. How the trees had grown and even the garden must be visited and the chickens called and fed. Seated about the table once more they could scarcely eat. Thoughts too sacred for utterance filled their minds and but for

Charlie's prattle, conversation would have been stilled by very excess of joy. The first questions had been asked and answered; the deeper thoughts were struggling within.

Dinner over, Mr. Grafton sat awhile, but he could not talk freely as he had been wont to do. His eyes followed his wife and daughter as they performed the ever recurring tasks of the household and his mind reverted to the story of the ancient condemned to spend his time in constantly rolling up the hill a stone, which as constantly rolled down again. Women did have a hard time of it. Of that he was convinced. How faithful and unselfish most of them were. If beloved and happy in their homes, they always were. Were they not? Could he think of any who were not? And before him passed in review, one after another, the different households of his acquaintance. He could recall no exception to the rule. This was not true of men. No, men were not thus controlled; with them the home with its joys and sorrows was but an incident of life. To the true womanly woman, it was life itself.

Rousing himself from his reverie he went out, aimlessly at first; the day was a broken one and now far spent, but not many steps had been taken before work was presented which needed to be done and this led to more. Shortly he found himself busily employed and interested in the completion of what had long been neglected. But the ever busy mind would not be still. The work of the farm; was not that, too, a rolling up the hill of a stone which by all the forces of nature was forced again to the bottom? No, the scene was changed, the hills were not the same, the landscape varied from hour to hour; the Summer's sun and the Winter's cold, the bursting bud and the falling leaf, secured an infinite variety. The kaleidoscope might be old and well worn, but the views were never quite the same.

The four walls of a kitchen—oh! there

was little coloring there. The same stew pan and coffee pot constantly in view, until perchance, worn and defaced they succumbed to the inevitable. And then—well, others were brought to share the same fate.

Ah, women did need to be loved and cherished. That was the contract. This was the promise on the part of her master. Master? Yes, man was the master and the life of the wife was at his mercy.

Should this be so? Was it just?

He could not tell. Women were not happy though, who looked down upon their husbands. Indeed, did they not desire to look up to them? Was ever woman truly mated who did not fully esteem and reverence her mate? To despise him, was to inflict untold horrors upon the future of the soul confided to her care. That was sure.

The loved wife and mother was the happiest individual of the whole human race. Yes, that was true; she found liberty in love and happiness in duty, and yet for it all was she dependent upon another. This had been the unvarying history of the race. Happy marriage had but few conditions, but those conditions must most inflexibly be met.

The unmarried were not to be considered; unmarried men and women were alike in their social and natural rights. All this was quite apart from the question of marriage, the creation of homes and the uplifting of the race. Every child possessed the right to be well born. If not well born it was defrauded. Whatever defrauded the future child of its birthright was inexpressibly wicked and would most surely be revenged. Could anything worse be conceived?

And what of Mary's future? She was now a woman; so far the direction of her life had been in the hands of her parents. She would yet be guided by them. What should they do? What could they do?

Poverty never seemed so crushing in its weight before. The prayer of Agur came up before him. Give me not poverty, "lest

"I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

Yes, one felt like questioning the fortune that denied him the right to "provide things needful" for his family. And now was the time; Mary's destiny would soon be fixed for life—and those who might come after her? Ah! how far reaching the responsibility of life. Did the dear God load man with such responsibility and then deny him power to act in accordance with the dictates of his reason and his judgment? Was there a God? And where did he dwell? And what were the evidences of his existence? Did not all the operations of nature proceed without regard to man, and was he not the mere sport of circumstance, a leaf from the tree of life, afloat upon the ocean of existence for a brief moment, soon to sink into the depths of unknown and unknowable nothingness,—that bourne from whence no traveler returns?

How soon does the wisest reach the little limit of his knowledge. Faith and Hope buoy him up, but what are faith and hope which do not rest upon knowledge?

Grafton had been busy with his thoughts as he worked in the garden, and had not noticed the approaching footsteps of his daughter, who now stood beside him.

"Father," said she, "why do you stay out here?"

"Why, daughter, don't you know that 'men must work and women must weep?'"

"Oh yes; but not always; life isn't all working and weeping. We've been having a happy time in the house. Charlie and I have been playing pranks and mother laughed like a girl at our folly, and we want you to come in."

"It is nearly time now," said he, "to do the evening chores; it will soon be night."

"Well, we will all help, won't we, Charlie?"

Looking up from his task Mr. Grafton saw that his wife and little son were near at hand, coming from the house.

"We couldn't let Mary get away from

us," said the mother, with an evident attempt at gaiety, "she has been bringing back the old times in the house and the children have had such a romp."

"Yes, and mother played too," said Charlie.

"Becoming young again, are you, Emily?"

"Well, George," she said, "we never had an eighteen year old daughter come home to visit us before. And do you know, I'm almost afraid of her, she makes me think so much of your sister Ellen as she was at Mary's age. Two or three times I have called her Ellen and I am afraid I've lost the little Mary that used to cling to my apron."

"Ah, mother," said Mary putting her arm about her mother's waist, "you have not lost your daughter's love. Come father, throw down that old hoe and let us all go and feed the stock and see the pigs eat their corn, as we used to do."

Willing hands made light the evening work and when done, all gathered upon the porch and in the fading light discussed the family hopes and fears.

Mrs. McFarland had intimated to Mary that some changes would be made in the arrangement of classes at the Institute, during the vacation, and that she might be enabled to offer her a position as teacher of some of the under classes for the ensuing year. This would release her from work in the kitchen and allow her to continue her studies in some of the higher branches. The lady was disposed to be very "thrifty" in the arrangement however, and had not hesitated to convey the impression to Mary that she ought to thank her stars for the opportunity of becoming a teacher and that she must not think of receiving pay for her services.

"If this is done," said Mary, "and I am engaged, Madam Emory, who has been receiving \$40 per month, will be discharged, and I am so sorry for her, as she needs the position and pay."

"Perhaps," said Mr. Grafton, "if she is

discharged she can obtain another situation, for it seems to me you ought to continue at the Institute."

"But how can I get clothing to wear?" said Mary. "I've worn threadbare my little stock and I could not have got through the last year if Mrs. McFarland had not given me a nice dress of hers that was spoiled for her in the making."

"It seems to me," said Mr. Grafton, "that there is an opportunity for you at the Institute which you must avail yourself of and as opportunities come so seldom you must write and tell Mrs. McFarland that you accept; as for the clothing we will sell the last cow, if need be, to get it. At present this will not be necessary."

Mrs. Grafton joined in the opinion that this was the course that met her approval, although she dreaded to allow Mary again to leave her.

But what will you do? Must you leave the farm?" said Mary mournfully.

"Yes," said Mr. Grafton with determination, "we shall be obliged soon to give it up and I think that we will not remain longer than next Spring. I can, by closing out what we have here get enough to start us in a very small way upon a claim in the western part of the State. Perhaps I may be able to make a new farm that will be valuable at sometime in the future. We will get on in some fashion, never fear."

"I didn't know," said Mary, "until I went away how terribly hard women can be toward each other. They seem to acknowledge among themselves that they occupy an inferior position, and so when they have a semblance of authority over others, they tyrannize. Mrs. McFarland meant to be just and yet she was terribly hard and cruel to the kitchen girls and chamber maids, of whom there were three or four. She did not appear to think they had any rights or privileges and all her little power appeared to be put forth to crush any aspirations which they might

have. Young girls even if of foreign birth and ignorant, have hopes and expectations, and yet, so far as could be judged by her actions, Mrs. McFarland did not acknowledge their right to think of anything higher than peeling potatoes and washing dishes. There must be truth in the Bible account of the subordinate position assigned to women, for they seem to recognize it themselves. Cursed themselves they endeavor quite generally to keep from rising, those whom they consider as occupying a lower position."

"Life is a riddle at best," said Mr. Grafton, "and yet there is nothing more sure than that injustice perpetuates itself. Slaves make the meanest overseers." After a moment's silence he said:

"I think now that you are here, Mary, to keep your mother company for the Summer, that as soon as we are through with our harvest, that I will go on a prospecting tour and see what can be done in the way of finding a new location, and when that is determined on, will make the change while we yet have a few dollars to help ourselves with. For if we remain where we are until Spring, we shall come out 'Spring poor' and unable to make any change whatever."

Affairs at the Grafton homestead moved gently along. Mary was both guest and member of the family. Mother and daughter were constantly together and the mutual exchange of confidence was uninterrupted. Together they performed the tasks of the day and together they received the occasional calls and congratulations of well wishers.

At a church "festival" which the Graftons attended in Plainville, shortly after Mary's arrival home, Mr. Ellery, the minister, was the first to congratulate Mrs. Grafton upon the possession of so charming a daughter.

"I thought," said he, "that she would improve her opportunities, and it is apparent that she has done so. She will make a

grand woman if the promise of her youth is kept."

Mr. Busteed, who was present, had overheard the eulogies of the preacher, and shortly after, finding him separated from the Graftons, took him to task for the expression of his views.

"Don't you know," said he, "that Grafton is financially busted? That he has got to leave his farm; that he is mortgaged out, and that it's all brought about by his extravagant management, sending that girl off to an expensive school and the like?"

"Well, Mr. Busteed," said the preacher quite decidedly, "if he had not sent her, he would have failed in the most important duty that will probably come to him while he lives."

"But isn't it a man's first duty to care for his family and provide for their wants?"

"Yes, but you ought to know that it is written that 'man shall not live by bread alone.' Life, Mr. Busteed, is a problem, a preparation for something to come, or, it is a riddle that no man can read. Now, this being the main business of a true life, the enlargement of the powers of the mind, of the soul, is absolutely the only way to make that preparation; to increase the future capital."

"Why Mr. Ellery, you talk like a free thinker. I thought you preached Christ and free salvation?"

"So I do, so I do," said he with a twinkle of the eye, "but I want Christ to have something that's worth saving for his trouble."

Mr. Busteed was not very well versed in theology, or, indeed in anything but the getting of money, and he moved away from the preacher with a vague idea that Mr. Ellery was becoming radical, or in some way departing from the orthodox standards.

Mr. Busteed was a church member for much the same reason as that which induced him to insure his property. Having

paid the premium and placed the policies in his safe, the matter was dismissed from his mind. Somebody else was carrying his risks and he did not propose to trouble himself further in relation to the matter. In religion, "Jesus paid it all" came very near expressing his creed. To be sure a man ought not to be guilty of "out breaking" sin, but men in his opinion were very fallible creatures. In total depravity he firmly believed, man was bad by nature; entirely so, and as he couldn't make himself better if he tried, he "let out the job," as he expressed it, and in his view, his duty consisted only in occasionally interviewing his Agent who had the whole matter in charge. As for himself being "diligent in business" was the duty which in his opinion overshadowed all others.

Thus equipped and prepared he was able not only to deal harshly with those who came into his power, but to justify himself with what he termed religion, and woe to the luckless wight who failed not only in paying notes but in "believing" as well; for such the world had no room.

Mr. Busteed did not fail to note that at the festival Mary Grafton was the observed of all observers. Mary had always been a favorite, but to the general favor with which she had been received was now added somewhat of curiosity in viewing the girl who was struggling not for social recognition, dress and the triumphs of so-called society, but rather for education and intellectual advancement. Easily, she was the queen of the evening, and to Busteed the fact was an enigma. He could not solve it. She wasn't as pretty as doll faced Jenny Harris and her dress was plain; jewelry she had none; her people were poor, with prospects of future poverty in store.

Moving uneasily away, Busteed came in contact with Grafton; slightly irritated, why he knew not, he would have passed without speaking, but this he could not well do without appearing to offer rudeness to an

old acquaintance. He did not want to do that.

"Well, Grafton," said he, "they tell me that you are going to leave your farm."

"Yes, that is my intention, in fact I shall be obliged to do so."

"Obliged? Why, you will go of your own free will, won't you?"

"No, circumstances will compel me."

"Well, you are responsible for the circumstances, ain't you?"

"The reason why I shall leave the farm," said Grafton, "is because I can not raise money enough, by cropping, to pay interest on money at a high rate, and afford a respectable living for my family. I am not responsible for the high rate of interest, or for the low prices of my products, and between these two the necessity arises. These two items tell the whole story."

"Well Grafton, farming must be profitable generally, or so many would not remain in the business. Half our people in this country are farmers, and it must be that they are satisfied or they would quit a business that didn't pay."

"You forget, Busteed, that opportunity is lacking for general change. It can't be done. Look at the reports in the papers of the horrible condition of the coal miners in many places. You say if they don't like their business 'let them quit;' but they can't. Men do not easily change the habits of a life. Thousands of women and girls are stitching their lives away for a few cents a day. You say 'if their work doesn't suit let them quit.' But it is impossible. Men and women in the mass, are bound by their surroundings. The peons of Mexico might emigrate, and the factory operatives might stop their wasting toil, if it were possible, but in the mass and in general, it is not. Conditions are made for most men and most men are dissatisfied, in part at least, but environment is too powerful to allow radical change.

Men who know that they are in the frying pan fear the fire."

"Then according to your view most folks are being fried for their fat."

"Substantially that's true."

"Well, who's a doing the frying?" said Busteed rather hotly.

"I will answer you as Horace Greeley did an inquirer a good many years ago, when he told his questioner that the great difference between the wealthy and prosperous and the poor and impoverished, was brought about by the fact that one class paid interest on money and the other received it.

"Well, if interest is such a power why shouldn't men save and shortly they could begin to loan."

"We were talking about people at large, the general public, and not special cases. Now if everybody undertook loaning who would they loan to?"

"Oh shucks," said Busteed with a disgusted air, "let every fellow look out for himself and do the best he can, that's my plan."

"Yes," said Grafton, "that's the way they do in hell."

Both men had by this time become somewhat heated by their controversy, and realizing that the place was not suited to a discussion, they separated, each somewhat disgusted with the other.

The festival soon came to an end. Not so, with its consequences.

Mr. Busteed felt somewhat aggrieved, at what he considered the rather lax views expressed by Mr. Ellery, and openly questioned, whether it might not be time to make a change in the pastorate. Indeed he did not hesitate to charge the good man with advocating unsound views upon the "atonement," "and," said he, "that is a mighty important matter, and we can't afford to allow anybody to preach unsound doctrine when it won't cost any more to have the thing straight."

Thus bad begun, while worse remained

behind. Within a day or two, Mr. Grafton heard it reported that he and Busteed had "almost fit" at the festival; that Busteed had said that he would fry the fat out of him (Grafton) and that Grafton had told him (Busteed) to go to hell.

CHAPTER XII.—MR. ELLERY IN TROUBLE.

NOT only was all Plainville very much interested in the questions which appeared to have arisen at the festival, but the surrounding country as well took them up. No person could be found who was not ready to express an opinion or back it up, if need be, with arguments more or less mighty. The controversy very soon took the shape which might have been seen from the first and the two sides, which are necessary in a quarrel of any sort, resolved themselves into those who attacked and those who defended Mr. Ellery.

Busteed led the attack; Mr. Ellery had previously shown signs of independence, but at the festival he had openly opposed him and as he furnished the larger share of the preacher's support, this, in his opinion, was rank ingratitude and deserved fitting punishment. The officers and more prominent members of the church, sympathized with Mr. Ellery, but felt called upon by the exigencies of the situation to act with Busteed, and Mr. Ellery shortly found himself in the queer position of one who was openly defended, with one or two exceptions, only by those outside of his flock. All treated him with deference and no one attempted argument with him, but wherever two or three were gathered together the matter in dispute was sure to be introduced and discussed, generally with much heat and feeling. Gradually, too, the subject under discussion, as is often the case, underwent change as the discussion proceeded. Busteed had charged Mr. Ellery with giving utterance to unsound doctrine and proposed his dismissal upon that ground, although it was very gener-

ally felt that his real reason was the fact that Mr. Ellery was disposed to free himself from the rather irksome control exercised by Busteed over the affairs of the church. This had been the original cause, but in the discussions which followed it was shown that the preacher had taken sides with Grafton and against Busteed; that he had upheld the idea that the farmer and his family were entitled to the good things of life and society as well as those who only absorbed what others had created. He had thus become, in the eyes of the farmers, their champion; discussion proceeded upon the new base and would shortly have left Mr. Ellery entirely out of the question had not something occurred which again made him a prominent figure.

Mr. Ellery possessed a very modest turn-out in the shape of a horse and buggy. The horse was fat and sleek but somewhat the worse for many years of wear, still the preacher and his wife contrived to extract a deal of comfort from the possession of these means of locomotion.

One morning, while the controversy was at its height, when Mr. Ellery went into his stable to feed his horse, he was horrified to find that some miscreant had entered the stable during the previous night and sheared the old horse's mane and the hair from his tail completely and smoothly. In addition, the wretch had with white paint traced on the sides of the poor beast broad stripes of white, evidently intended to represent ribs; about his eyes an enormous pair of spectacles had been painted in white, by the same villainous hand.

The result was appalling. Deeply injured as he was, Mr. Ellery could not forbear laughing at the odd expression produced in the looks of the poor beast by the spectacles. For the moment he was almost stunned by the sense of personal injury involved in the indignity thus thrust upon him; the next instant he hurried into

the house to acquaint his wife with the new phase which the argument against himself had taken.

Mrs. Ellery could see nothing to laugh at in the mournful condition of the poor beast and at once set to work to see if the paint would rub off. But it had been done "in oil" though evidently not by one of the old masters. They could not remove it and as anything which would remove the paint would probably remove the hair also, they were at a stand still regarding further procedure.

After breakfast the parson went over to "Uncle" Bill Weldon's blacksmith shop. Uncle Bill had shod the horse from time to time and like most blacksmiths having picked up a knowledge of many things useful to the keepers of horses, Mr. Ellery had gradually come to consider him the proper person to consult whenever anything ailed his horse. Something ailed him now, that was clear. He went for advice.

"Mr. Weldon," said he, "I want you to go over and see my horse."

"Sartin, sartin," said Uncle Bill, "what 'pears to be the matter with him?"

On the way the preacher related the whole shameful story.

"That's John Busteed," said the blacksmith "I've heard him poke fun at the old hoss and I remember sometime ago of his making spectacles with chalk over an old horse's eyes. Them specs was soon rubbed off, but the idee is the same and there ain't another one in the place that would have thought of harming your horse but him. He's the feller."

After viewing the horse Weldon prevailed upon Mr. Ellery to turn him over to his care.

"I'll scrape off what I can," said he, "with a right sharp knife, and then I'll go over him careful with benzine and I can clean him off, I guess, quite natural; the mane and tail, however, is cleaned off quite on-natural. It'll take time, and lots of it, to fix them."

Weldon was one of Mr. Ellery's partisans; and the opportunity of showing up the miserable character of "the opposition" was altogether too good a one to be allowed to pass unimproved. Before the morning had passed and while Mr. Weldon was engaged in scraping the paint from the horse's sides, most of the male inhabitants of the village had viewed the animal and expressed an opinion as to the author of the deed. None thought the elder Busteed privy to the transaction, but all felt that the insult to the worthy owner, which insult each partisan took home to himself, had been the result of the objections raised by Busteed to Mr. Ellery.

"The idee is," said one, rather more intemperate in speech than the rest, "that nobody has a right to do anything or say anything contrary to the wishes of the fellows with money. Old Busteed and the fellows that work with him fix money matters round here pretty much as they like and now he's a-trying to say what the preacher shall think. Must be something he's afraid of, for just as soon as Mr. Ellery had but a word of encouragement for Grafton's idee, Busteed is determined to get rid of him."

The shearing of the parson's horse aroused a depth of feeling among all classes of people in the vicinity almost unprecedented and discussions involving the rights of thought and property and the control which one man might rightfully exercise over another, were everywhere rife.

It so happened that at the time of these occurrences that the Farmers Alliance was being organized in the vicinity of Plainville and to the questions which had taken their rise, as the reader has seen, in the discussions between Messrs. Grafton, Ellery and Busteed, were added the general subject of the relations of capital and labor, as exemplified by the Alliance and the right of the producer of wealth to an equitable share of his own production.

Feeling ran high; no one escaped, and a

disposition was manifested to question much which had heretofore passed without challenge.

Mr. Grafton made his trip into the western part of the State as he had announced. Instead of going as he had intended, by wagon, upon reflection he had changed his plan and taken the cars. A few days' sojourn in a western county was sufficient. It was apparent that all the difficulties which surrounded the farmer in the vicinity of Plainville were in full force, or would soon come into play, in the western counties and that to these difficulties would be added a greater uncertainty in cropping, which he did not care to test. "Uncle Sam's" desirable farms were all taken in Kansas; that was worse.

He had fully made up his mind to leave the farm before he was compelled to do so and while the opportunity for disposing of his equities yet remained.

Being in Plainville one day he thought he would ask Mr. Busteed if he could tell him how he could make the change. He did not expect much help from Busteed, but as he was familiar with all the business transactions of the vicinity it occurred to him that some hint of advantage might possibly be obtained.

Inquiring for Mr. Busteed he was told that he was in his office. Entering he found Mr. Busteed in company with a farmer with whom he was well acquainted.

"I don't want to intrude," said Grafton, politely, "but I just called to ask if you could put me onto a way of trading my farm?"

"No intrusion, Grafton, sit down," said Busteed quite pleasantly; "I would do anything I could for you, in reason, though I don't expect you would give me credit for it, if I did. Fact is, Grafton, you are not disposed to give me any show for my life. I expect one of these days that the Farmers Alliance will order me before it for trial. I understand that you are a prominent member and I wouldn't be surprised

to have you turn up as one of the judges to try my case," and the money lender laughed, as though he had said something quite witty.

"You seem to think that you ought to be tried," said Grafton.

"Oh, come now, don't be so sharp; don't you see how good-natured I am; I believe in everybody having a fair show, and then if they don't take advantage of their opportunities, I don't know what more can be done; people can't be like little birds and have their victuals just pushed down their throats. Some of you folks that talk so much of the government doing this and that, appear to want the government to feed those who won't hunt worms; now I am satisfied to hunt for my worms."

"That may be all right for you," said Grafton, "but how do you suppose it suits the worms you catch?"

"Can't seem to please you at all to-day," said Busteed, "and I am sure I don't know of any chance to trade your farm just now. Might be a chance this Fall, if there is any immigration comes in and we raise a good crop. I should just like to know now, Grafton, why it is we can't get along. I am sure I have the kindest feelings in the world for you and yet you seem to think I am a horrible kind of a man. What's the reason?"

"Oh, you enlarge on the feeling. Men who think as you do are too common to consider 'horrible,' but the difference in mode of thought between your class of men and the class being rapidly created by the Alliance is radical. Now we believe that no man should possess property or have anything which he did not earn or receive in exchange for some valuable consideration."

"Why I believe that; you can't shut me out on such a rule as that. Fact is that is a rule of law, as I understand it."

"Well, now," said Grafton, "let us test this rule. A man buys lottery tickets in, let us suppose, an honestly conducted lot-

tery; the drawing takes place and he draws a blank; now for the money that he paid for his ticket did he receive 'a valuable consideration'—was the exchange between the buyer of the ticket and the seller, an equitable one, that should be upheld by the law?"

"By no means," said Busteed very cheerfully, "the man who bought the ticket is swindled, because his chance of gain is so remote, and the law very properly steps in and prevents lotteries, as opposed to public policy, even if honestly conducted, upon the ground that the general public must necessarily lose large amounts of its money with no return. The lottery company gets the money of the public without returning a valuable consideration. The law holds that the millionth of a chance to win is no chance at all and prevents the swindle because the company fails to return the valuable consideration which must be given to constitute an equitable exchange. Oh, I am solid on that prove 'no consideration' and you can knock any contract cold."

"Seven-eighths of our farmers are living on mortgaged farms," said Grafton; "the mortgage is made to secure the return of the money borrowed; interest is paid in addition; now you know that under present circumstances the givers of these mortgages have no more chance of paying off their mortgages than the holders of lottery tickets have of drawing fortunes. A few may be able to pay and a few may draw prizes, but generally speaking it will be impossible, and you money loaners know it. Now let us see how it works in actual practice. There is Charley Bagby, a steady hard working man with a small family, who has been in debt and struggling along for four years. He has had to have money and has paid your bank the highest rates for it; in order to get money, he has sometimes paid large premiums in addition to the interest. Then he has bought teams and machinery, often paying a premium above cash price, in order to buy 'on time,'

the only way he could buy. He began farming with only a capital of a few hundred dollars. He bought a quarter section farm for \$1,800, worked hard on it for four years, spent no idle time and fooled away no money except to your bank for interest. At the end of the four years the place is sold for \$3,800, owing to the advance in land caused by the big crops of wheat raised those years. Charley pays up his notes and finds that he hasn't quite as much left after four years of hard work as he began with. And further he has kept a book account which shows that he has paid in premiums and interest, for the use of money, between twenty-two and twenty-three hundred dollars in four years.* At the end of the time he is cleaned out and turned adrift; now what has he got for the more than two thousand dollars of interest money which he has paid? The 'machine' has taken from him this money; the result of his toil; what did it return to him as an equivalent? Did he really get anything?"

"Why he must have thought he was getting something or he wouldn't have paid the money."

"Of course he was fooled," said Grafton, "but it is clear now that he really got nothing. He might as well have played against a faro bank. Charley's money is gone from him, your bank got the most of it; what's the consideration you gave him and where is it? Charley's case is a little more pronounced than a good many others because he went through the flint mill so quick and we all know the facts, but if we figure right down close, we find that most farmers are on the same road and certain to land in the same net. The fact is, in all these transactions there has been no equitable consideration returned for the huge amounts they have paid as interest and as you say, if an equitable consideration is lacking, the business is in the nature of a fraud. It is a skin game. We

*Fact.

have become so familiar, however, with this way of doing business, and it has been practiced so long, that we cannot blame parties who fail to see the wrongfulness of it. People are led by their interests until they are completely blinded. Society is to blame, the church is to blame, but no individual, no set of individuals, no class of men, can be charged with this wrong. And yet the law upholds it. Society would hold up its hands in holy horror if the law makers should protect and enforce the demands of card gamblers and yet the results of their demands would be no worse for the victims than is the case under the present system. True it is quite respectable to be on the winning side in this game; the churches uphold it, but that really shows nothing. I suppose that there is no form of injustice between man and man worse than chattel slavery, but that was upheld by the churches and those who would abolish it were denied all social recognition, not so very long ago. So you see, Mr. Busteed that there is a radical difference between our ideas of right and wrong to start out with. Now I suppose you would not say that a man ought always to have all he earns?"

"Why," said Busteed, "if a man was always to get all he earned how could it pay any man to hire another?"

"That's not the point at all, never mind that bridge until you come to it. The question is, ought a man to have all he earns? I say yes. You say no, and seek for a plan to take from him some portion of his earnings. That is the spirit which resulted in slavery. You propose to toll his earnings by some financial arrangement; it makes no difference how it is accomplished, if you take from him the profits of his labor you enslave him."

It is not probable that Mr. Busteed had ever given serious consideration to the thoughts presented by Grafton before, but as he happened to be in good humor he had determined to remain on good terms

with Grafton in any event, so he curbed for the moment any feeling of resentment he may have felt, saying:

"Well, it's plain that we don't look at things alike, but our interests in the long run ought to be the same. Whatever is for the best interests of the community ought to please us both."

"Oh, yes," said Grafton, "the only question is as to what is really for the best interests of people generally."

As Grafton came out of the office he saw gathered a little knot of men eagerly discussing something which they apparently regarded as quite important. As he was passing, Weldon, who made one of the gathering, called to him:

"Say, George, look here."

"What is it?" said he.

"Why it's this," said Weldon. "I have got a clue so that I know positively that John Busteed sheared and painted the preacher's horse and I thought I'd get your idee of what we'd ought to do about it."

"What's your clue?"

"Well, let me tell you. John was seen to drive out of town in his buggy and he threw, when he thought no one was looking, an old paint can and brush over the bank into the creek. It didn't happen to strike the water and some boys who were there brought it in. The paint left in the can matches that on the horse; it is not exactly white."

"Well," said Grafton, "it looks as though you had him there."

"Why of course, but what had we better do?"

"Well, what's wanted is first to make the parson's loss good. I should say that if half a dozen should go to old man Busteed and put the case right at him, that he would get the preacher another horse."

CHAPTER XIII.—CARE AND COUNSEL.

SINCE the events recorded in the last chapter a year has passed.

Mr. Ellery was yet in Plainville. The clumsy effort made to disgrace him pro-

duced the opposite effect from what had been intended, and made every well ordered inhabitant of the town his friend. And even Mr. Busteed, after the disclosures implicating his son had been made public, was prevented from advocating his removal by the feeling that for the present, at least, his opposition must cease.

As Grafton had proposed, a self-appointed committee waited upon Mr. Busteed and told him plainly that in their opinion he ought to get the preacher another horse. Quite a stormy scene ensued in which Busteed denied and scouted the evidence which they presented, but finally agreed to send Mr. Ellery's horse to one of his farms at a distance, and to lend him another until such time as the ill-used beast should be fit to be seen in public. The change had been made by the committee at once, and although a year had passed no thought of the old horse's return was expressed.

Mary was home again, albeit the home had been removed. Changed somewhat she was, with added charms of mind and person and with it all an increase of that air of rapt abandonment of self to high living and thinking which so seldom comes to the young and lovely, but when given to comely form and winning ways, the world is assured that nature has set her seal upon a masterpiece whose living and breathing soul shall carry with it a lesson of sweetness, of light and of life.

Grafton had struggled along as best he could. Since the time of the second mortgage he had only looked forward to being able to make some arrangement by which he might be able to receive for the farm some reasonable portion of what he considered its value, over the amount of the mortgage.

The knowledge that they were about to be obliged to leave their home weighed heavily upon Mrs. Grafton. She had been much attached to the farm; it was her

home; withdrawn from the world, here she felt at ease. To lose the home was to be obliged again to begin an unequal struggle. If they left the farm, life in town or village was a necessity, and with this she had been familiar in other years. Grafton cared little for appearances or for the thoughts of others; self centered, he depended upon his own opinion of himself; if his own conduct met the rather critical examination which he gave it, it mattered little to him what others might think. With his wife it was different; more sensitive naturally she had also been more exposed to social slights, which although consisting only of a shrug of the shoulders, a drawing away of the skirts or a cool "looking over," has for the sensitive and shrinking woman more terror than rough words and blows to men of nerve.

During the past year she had brooded upon the change which she felt must come. The fear of coming want which is the motive power to much of the world's activity, which impels the hardy mariner to brave the dangers of the seas, which nerves the arm of the mechanic and speeds the steps of the plowman upon the windy plain, is also weighing upon the mind of the lonely woman in the farm house kitchen, as she wearily makes her accustomed rounds.

Mrs. Grafton's health, never robust, began gradually to fail. She had reached that age when the powers of life begin to wane. Depressed in mind by the necessities of their position, fearful of the future, her heart sank within her as she contemplated the coming on of age which in her mind's eye was accompanied by deprivation and poverty. Mary had been to her both daughter and companion and upon the lofty spirit of her child she had gradually come to lean. For the future their lives were separated; she would not have it otherwise, it must be so. Mary must advance; how, she knew not; she took no counsel in this of flesh and blood,

but the spiritual discernment of her mind had clearly apprehended the upward tendency of the thoughts of her gifted child. They would lead her into light. What her part in life might be none could tell, but as the wing of the bird is made for the upper air and the odor of the flower for the Summer breeze, so was it clear to her woman's intuitive thought, that for Mary there was, there must be, a future which should take hold upon those higher and ennobling fields of mental vision which her life had failed to reach. She gloried in that "Looking Forward" which she felt she could not share and on which she could exert no further influence. Struggle against the feeling as she would, the thought impressed itself upon her more and more, that her work in life was done. Her little son clung to her as though to his child-like and simple vision had been revealed the loss of that gentle spirit to whom he had never gone for love and sympathy in his childish troubles, without receiving that comfort and consolation, which to a child, is like to nothing short of the everlasting arms of the Father. Her husband strove to awaken anew the thoughts and hopes of younger and happier days. To his caresses she returned a mild and languid recognition, but the work and the struggles of life had worn upon her physical frame; failing health left its impress upon her and melancholy seemed to mark her for its own. As her family gathered about her, each intent upon her happiness, she exerted herself to appear pleased at every attention and satisfied with their presence but they could not rouse her from the mental condition which physical weakness had fastened upon her. When Mary sat by her side and held her hand she seemed supremely content, and at such times was manifested that wonderful and mysterious process of the mind by which there seems to take place a transfusion of spirit. With Mary's hand in hers they were one again; one spirit possessed them,

one thought animated them. The mother lived anew in her daughter. What she had dared in the bright dreams of youth her child should realize. In her weakness, time and physical strength fled away and the windows of the soul were opened. The universe was an open book before her, peace held her in its embrace and the white winged angels of glorious thought ascended and descended before her eyes.

But these moments of exaltation were but temporary, pain called her back and then it was that no touch was like Mary's, no soothing word like the murmured tones of her whom the gentle invalid curiously began to regard as her other and perfected self.

The family gradually began to see that in the gentle and unasserting mother, had existed almost unknown and unnoticed, an ambition and a hope for social success and the attainment of those pleasant surroundings which so largely make up a woman's world, which had continued to live and exert their influence, to be at last rudely dispelled by the loss of home, and in her eyes, all possible means of accomplishing the secret desire of her heart.

To Grafton it was in the nature of a revelation; for himself he had not cared for wealth or the refinements of dress or fashion. That his wife had in her weakness betrayed the well concealed hopes of her life, for a well appointed and generous household, now shattered and destroyed by the loss of their home, which it was clear she had thought might afford at least the stepping stone to the realization of her hopes, was occasion for surprise and self reproach. Had he done all he could? Might he not have been able to obtain for her, what it now seemed she so much desired? But as he carefully scanned the record of the past he could not see that in aught he had failed; he had done what he could, if another could have done more it would be another who should be judged and not he himself.

For the most of the year which was now

past, he had continued to work the farm, but his wife's failing health and his own discouragement had prevented his being very successful in its conduct. Towards the close of the year he had been able to exchange his claim upon the farm for a small house with a few acres of land in the outskirts of the village of Plainville and after selling a portion of his stock, had removed his family to the new home, where Mary had found them on her return from her second year in Topeka. As a teacher she had been eminently successful, and during the latter half of the year had been receiving a moderate compensation for her services. At the close, she had been given a handsome present by the McFarlands, the Institute being now in a flourishing condition, and had received an urgent request to return at an increased salary for another year. And this had been her intention previous to her visit home. Her mother's condition however forbade. She could not leave her; nor did she desire to do so. The education which she had received at home and in which she had schooled herself, included her own advancement only as a means to an end. She desired to know, and to lift herself, that she might be able to assist in some way in the great work of life. How this was to be accomplished and in what way she should be able to serve, she had felt that she was yet too young to determine. The lesson, so seldom learned, that happiness is not grasped by self-seeking; that it comes only to those who serve and never to those who desire to rule, she had instinctively grasped. She had not learned it. It came to her from a child, and the earliest and most grateful recollection of her youth had been that of denying herself for the dear mother who now followed with wistful eyes her every step and motion. To be able to minister to her comfort was her chief pleasure. Of duty and the requirements of natural or religious law she did not think. In service

she found pleasure and if at any time she had failed in this, pain had been the result; this determined her conduct, she heeded no other law.

What a transformer and miracle worker is love. Under its influence the rudest and most selfish take on the likeness of those high and holy beings which exist in imagination, only in the realms of the blest. How every base passion and unworthy thought sinks in the presence of the object of its adoration. Could it exist with respect to all, Heaven would at once be reached and all sorrow flee away. Love conquers all and is the law of that true life which is to be.

Since it became plain that he was to lose his home Grafton had given much thought to the cause which had involved himself and neighbors in what appeared to them an almost universal ruin. Many were losing their homes and all were finding their means of subsistence gradually slipping away from their control. His previous reading had enabled him to mentally grasp the principles and causes which he saw in operation around him, and he began an inquiry, which when he had reached a conclusion, ended only in a resolve to do what he could to make known certain evils and their causes, as the best and only means within his reach toward remedying the conditions which he felt sure were destroying the happiness of the great middle class to which he belonged.

Among other means of information he sought the opinions of those in authority, as to the cause and means to be employed in remedying the evils which all fair minded men began to acknowledge as existing. With Senator Bland he had a very slight acquaintance, but as he was a public servant, he felt that duty required him to answer questions of great public moment when called upon for his opinion. Accordingly he wrote the senator, asking for his opinion as to the course which the farmers and people of Kansas should

pursue. He received the following letter:

UNITED STATES SENATE,
WASHINGTON, D. C. }

GEORGE GRAFTON ESQ.,
PLAINVILLE, KAN.

Dear Sir:—I have before me your favor of the—

* * * * *

While I have given very much thought to the question you suggest, I cannot go into it very deeply in the space of an ordinary letter, and in fact I would not undertake, even if I had ample time, to formulate a remedy for the present condition of things. No remedy can be devised which will bring relief to everybody. At the very best, a very considerable number of those who are heavily mortgaged must succumb. It is difficult to apportion the responsibility for the trouble. The contraction of the currency which has been going on for the last three or four years especially, is responsible for part of it. This has had to do with the decline in values of farm products, notably in cattle, but the farmers themselves have powerfully contributed to the decline in the prices of farm products by their plan of raising only those things which were designed for a market away from home, and by the reliance upon outside sources for the things which they could have produced and many of which they did produce at home.

Very few Kansas farmers raise their own bread, still fewer provide themselves with meat or fruit, while the seeds, the soap and a great number of minor things which twenty-five years ago were all produced at home, are now universally supplied from outside. The result is that the farmer not only is wholly dependent on outside markets for what he sells and also for what he buys, but he pays for the outward and inward transportation of articles which he ought to produce at home and on which he now pays a tax to the railroads and the middle men, which greatly diminishes his own profits, and in most cases, in fact, eats into his capital. The effect upon the price of what he raises is still worse because as he insists on selling everything at Kansas City, Chicago and other distant markets, he puts the question of price more fully under the control of those who purchase at those points. To all these things have been added high taxes, some extravagance in living, and in fact a general departure from those minor economies which have been the characteristic and the necessity, in fact, of the business of farming. It is impossible to go into this matter in detail with the time at hand, but you will readily see the object of my statement. As I have before stated, no remedy can produce immediate effect. There must I think, be a complete reversal of the practices of which I have spoken. There must be a greater diversification of industry upon the farm. It is not going to be possible much longer to ship grain to

Liverpool or to any point outside the United States. The further it is shipped the greater tax the farmer pays for his transportation, but there is a still more conclusive reason why the foreign market cannot be the reliance of the Kansas farmer. The wheat of India is already crowding us out of the Liverpool market. Large areas of virgin soil have been brought under cultivation in Africa and elsewhere, the product of which will come in competition with the wheat, corn and pork of the United States and I am quite sure that within five years India wheat will be selling in New York. The farmer, therefore, must raise those things which he can sell at home, the butter, eggs, cheese, fruit, vegetables and so on, and above all things he must live as nearly within himself as possible: that is to say, off of the productions of his own soil and thereby keep as nearly as possible out of that line of production which compels him to submit to the exactions of railroads and middlemen and makes him dependent upon the varying fortunes of speculation for market and for prices.

I have written the foregoing somewhat hastily and no doubt crudely, but I hope there is enough in it to put you on inquiry if you have not already given the subject thought, and I shall be glad to hear what you have to say in reply. I am very truly yours,

PHILIP BLAND.

Grafton received the senator's letter with another at Plainville and took them from the office just as he had vainly endeavored to sell a few bushels of potatoes which he had taken to the stores for sale. He had taken only five bushels of extra fine ones and a few pounds of butter with quite a large basket of eggs.

Mr. Baker would take the eggs, he could ship them to Kansas City—if Grafton would take goods from his shelves in payment—at eight cents per dozen. He really did not care for them and only took them as an accommodation to his customers. His only profit was in the goods for which they were to be exchanged. Butter he could not ship at any price, most of the villagers made their own; he did buy a little at from five to eight cents, but at present he was overstocked and would be glad to take four cents a pound from any one who would take all he had. Busteed, who happened into the store, bought a bushel of the potatoes, paying twenty-five cents for them, saying, that although he had plenty in his garden he would rather

buy a bushel than to dig them himself or hunt up any one else to do it for him

Four bushels of the potatoes remained in the wagon; exchanging the eggs for groceries, which Grafton thought might be useful, and taking the butter for which there was no sale he slowly drove back to his home. Putting his horses in the stable he sat down to read the senator's letter. That he was disgusted our readers will readily believe.

Having read it once through he again read it, this time carefully and critically.

"At the very best a very considerable number must succumb."

Yes, most farmers would.

"Farmers had contributed to the result by raising only those things designed for market away from home."

But what could they sell at home?

"Very few Kansas farmers raise their own bread, meat and fruit."

What did the senator mean? Most raised all.

"The farmer insists on selling everything at Kansas City, Chicago and other distant markets."

But where else could he sell the beef, pork and grain which was all he could sell at all?

No remedy but to cease producing the only things which could be sold, cease patronizing railroads and "live within himself."

In that event what would become of the railways and of the thousands who depend upon them for bread? What of the townspeople who now depend upon the farmers' traffic? Would they all starve together or go back to savagery? Either the senator was ignorant of a remedy or wished to quiet apprehensions until the time when most had "succumbed" and he and the hirelings who were fleecing the people were secure in the possession of their ill-gotten gains and their victims too weak to offer further opposition.

Opening the other letter it proved to be

from the editor of a widely circulated journal whose writings he had often admired. It was as follows:

CHICAGO, ILL.,—

MR. GRAFTON,—

My Dear Sir:—I thank you for the kindly and fraternal tone of your letter and I am pleased to be brought in personal relation with one so entirely in earnest as yourself.

* * * * *

I believe with you that the farmers are destined to boss things ultimately; but before that happy time arrives we must turn a lot of mountains upside down. I never appreciated the magnitude of the task that confronts us as fully as I do to-day. The monopoly foe has as yet only wiggled its little finger, comparatively speaking. It has not begun to show forth its tremendous resources, for there has been no call for them. It is on top and has the people by the neck. Just wait until *demos* begins to get turbulent and you will see monopoly's mailed band come forth. We fellows who are on the watch towers, and see these things can however by no means seek a quiet place and wait for the storm to roll by. Our capacity to apprehend the work and peril only truly comes to us when we are enlisted for the war, and could not escape our duty if we would. We can see all the toil and danger that is before, but our mission has possessed us and even the thought of shirking becomes impossible. We must march right along at the head of the column until we keel over for good, and our persistence in doing will be the same whether we close our eyes in victory or defeat, and know our fate beforehand,

Yours very truly,
HARROLD WESTOVER.

CHAPTER XIV.—THOUGHTS AND WORDS.

AS GRAFTON finished his reading of Westover's letter it dropped from his hands. What a radical difference, thought he, is there in men. And who and what made them to differ? Was it not the ideal held up before the mind of each? Clearly the mind of Westover was not moved upon by the same influences which held the Senator's attention. His thought took hold of the eternal and the invisible, of that which should endure of those great and glorious truths which in every age have moved men to count their own ease as naught and to find their chiefest pleasure in efforts for the good of the unthinking, the careless, and the unthankful. Paul endured as "seeing the invisible." Yes, invisible to

most, but not the less real. The Senator was only another man with a muck rake, his eyes were fixed upon the ground; he could not raise them; his ideal was there, mixed with the muck and filth of the floor, while just above his head glorious paintings and beautiful gems were all unnoticed. Why should it be so? The mental capacity of the Senator was as great, perhaps far greater than that of the other. Ah, ideals moved men—made them what they were. And to what were men indebted for their ideals? Did they make them for themselves? God bless us, no. Any careful observer of childhood knew that the bent of the mind of youth was fixed in infancy; depended much upon the character of those who had preceded him “even to the third and fourth generation.” The potter had power of the clay. Had then the man no choice? Yes, but each must move within the lines marked out for him by the constitution of his mind. No man could escape from himself. But did not circumstance and surroundings make or unmake men? True, but who made circumstances and surroundings? Opportunity made heroes; no hero could exist without the opportunity for heroism was presented. Yes, but the latent hero existed and opportunity only showed what had been created and prepared for the time of its appearing. Alas, in what a maze were we all enveloped. One thing however, was clear, each man followed his ideal. Napoleon followed his “star” and never faltered until it faded from his sight. But how was it with common men? How was it with himself? Ah, there difficulty began. One could not judge himself. Talk of the deceit practiced by man upon his fellow! It was as nothing to the self deception imposed upon ourselves. But we could judge others; those about us. Aye, we were quite apt at that. What, then, were the ideals of common men? Westover’s ideal possessed him. Was it so with others? Did common men peril all for

ideas? Surely they did, though most were unconscious of the motives which influenced them. How the soldier fought for his flag. True the flag was but a rag, but it represented an idea and the gory bodies of the slain represented the devotion of the common mind to ideas. The thought of gold and the power of wealth were but ideas, but did they not possess men completely? Did not the common man peril all for gold? But the Senator and Westover were both thinking of men. Did not both appear to desire the good of their fellows? And why then did they so radically differ? Was it not in this that the Senator subordinated man, his thoughts, his feelings, his aspirations and even his God given rights to the power of the Napoleons of trade, the controllers of markets, and the combinations of capital? Were not these the men who, in his thought controlled their brother man and would control him?

Were not these the powers which were superior, with him, to all the rights, hopes, and aspirations of common humanity? Did not his thought of the future bind men with the chains of trade, which were forged by other men, with whom he felt a stronger comradeship than with those whom he coolly subjected to the fate of mere tribute bearers? In the mind of the Senator was not capital and its combinations the master of man? In his thought Mammon reigned, and the power of God and the hope of humanity were but fables for the dreamers. Kansas farmers must “succumb.” Mammon must rule, peaceably if he could, forcibly if he must. Yes, that was true, the idea of the Senator subordinated man to the power of organized greed. Labor was, with him a commodity to be bought and sold—and the laborer? Ah, he could “succumb.”

Westover’s thought placed man above the power of capitalistic force; with him man was above money, humanity was first to be considered. With him there was yet a God in Israel.

The difference was radical. For himself he knew which side he was on. Come what would, he would follow the one and oppose the other.

Having thought out the problem Grafton rose from the seat in the stable where he had sat, in reading the letters, and went into the house. As he opened the door, Mary was sitting at the sewing table, some unfinished work was upon her lap, her head was resting upon the table in front, while Charlie stood at her side. As her father entered she raised her head and began to wipe her eyes with her handkerchief; evidently she had been weeping.

"Is mother worse to-day?" said Grafton.

"O, I don't know that she is any worse, but it is plain that she is no better," said the daughter as the tears began again to flow, "she is sleeping now; the doctor was here a little while ago, but he says it's of no use for him to come, that she doesn't need medicine."

"When will mamma be well?" said Charlie, "it is so still in the house and sister can't play with me and she's been crying and I don't want my mother sick," and the little fellow began to sob, while Mary was endeavoring to calm herself that she might the more readily comfort the child.

Grafton did not answer. Sitting down, he rested his elbows upon his knees and with his head in his hands abandoned himself to the gloomiest reflections.

Brushing away the tears Mary began tidying up the room; bringing a pail of cool water from the pump, she bathed her swollen eyes and proceeded to arrange for the evening meal.

Heedless of what was going on around him Grafton still continued in the characteristic attitude of despair which he had assumed. His thoughts ran back to the days of youth. In the bright dreams of the future, which came to him then, he could detect no likeness to the sober realities of the life he had lived. Was life only

a struggle to end in nothing? Was hope only an *ignus fatuus* to lure us on? Was man born only to be cheated, or to cheat himself with vain hopes and idle illusions? One way there was out of the darkness. The ideal held up before the mind of the true man was a perfect one; it took hold on higher things. A spark from the infinite Light possessed him. It was impossible that he should be content with sordid and imperfect beings. Sordid and imperfect men might be content. Human hogs might increase in fatness and grunt with satisfaction in their styes, but the life which should endure took no note of swill. To increase in knowledge one must be dissatisfied with ignorance. Intelligent discontent was the origin of all mental progress. Mind was necessary to a man, and the mind which grew must be fed. To a hog, swill was the chief concern. But the hog soon came to an end.

"Father," said Mary, "supper is ready."

Grafton roused himself from his reverie and mechanically the family gathered around the table.

"Mother is sleeping yet and I thought it best not to wake her," said the daughter.

"I really do not care for anything to eat, but I suppose it is best to go through the motions at about the regular time," said Grafton. "Charlie wants his supper, don't you, boy?"

Charlie made no audible reply. His mouth was full and he contented himself with replying by a nod of the head and a look of the eyes quite readily understood.

Grafton and his daughter ate but little; occasionally a furtive glance was exchanged, but very little was said. The mind of each was burdened by sorrowful thoughts of the wife and mother. What of her future? Would she recover and be to them as she had been? Was her mind to continue to wander? Had they, in fact, already lost the gentle soul whose smile and quiet word of approval outweighed in value the plaudits of all beside? They

could not tell. Hope struggled with despair. Uncertainty weighed upon their minds and left them in the control of that cankering care which corrodes and rusts every material treasure possessed by man.

The dishes had been cleared away. Mary was busy with her needle and still the invalid slept. Grafton sat reading by the evening lamp when a knock was heard at the door. Mary opened and Mr. and Mrs. Ellery were seen standing without. A most cordial invitation to enter from both father and daughter being given, they were soon seated in the one "living room" of the little cottage.

Mrs. Ellery's first inquiry was for the invalid, and as Mary replied, explaining as well as she could her symptoms and the condition of her mind, Mr. Ellery engaged Grafton in conversation, remarking that he had long intended and wished to call, but confessed that he scarcely knew what to say. His desire was to comfort and console, "but," said he, "Mr. Grafton, you must take the will for the deed."

"There is so much," said Grafton, "that passes all understanding."

"One can understand that trials and troubles may bring a final reward in some cases, but how is it with my poor wife? Is her life, which was always so careful and conscientious, now to end in a mere blank? Is it to be a struggle ending in nothing?"

"Even at the worst, my friend," said the preacher, "you must remember your children are to live. You cannot say that your lives are without fruit which gives no promise for the future."

"Ah, well," said Grafton, "that simply carries the struggle along. Another youth of promise may end in defeat as hers seems to have done."

"All roads, Mr. Grafton, lead to the end of the world, and considered without relation to what may take place beyond, no transaction of this, is fully explainable. But with a future existence in view, which

shall be a continuation of this, all is clear. Doubt is removed only by action. For every man there is a duty. He cannot know all reasons and understand all mysteries. Whatever appears to a man to be truth, that he must follow or be condemned. But he must follow. Conviction must be converted into conduct. Action must result, and if action square with his highest conception of truth all will be well. Of one thing I would, if I could, convince every man, and that is, that the Great Power which controls the forces of nature is friendly and favorable to man."

While Mr. Ellery continued talking, the ladies adjourned to the little bedroom which opened out of the room in which they sat. Mrs. Grafton was now awake; she knew Mrs. Ellery and spoke pleasantly to her.

"Where is Charlie?" said she.

"I put him to bed long ago, mother," said Mary.

"He was crying a while ago, I heard him just as I went to sleep and he wanted me. Poor dear, I fear he will do without me soon; Mary you will not leave him, will you?"

"Ah, mother," said Mary, "you must not talk of leaving us. If you would only think so, you could recover and bring happiness to us all."

"Do you not think," said Mrs. Ellery, "that it is your duty to try to get well?"

"No, I've struggled all my life, I have done what I could, I am tired and weary. Rest; rest, I must rest."

Mary was unwearied in her attentions and Mrs. Ellery assisted her as well as she could, but the invalid relapsed into a somnolent condition, but half awake, and answered their further inquiries with only a monosyllable now and then. After a short interval Mrs. Ellery rose and with her husband took leave of the sorrowing household.

"Grafton," said Mr. Ellery, as he took his hand in parting, "if there is anything

"I can assist you in, you will let me know, won't you?"

As time passed on the organization of farmers throughout the State gradually made progress. In the vicinity of Plainville most had been included. Grafton had been among the first to join the movement and had become prominent as an organizer and lecturer.

In moments of alarm or surprise, men in common with all animated nature, are wont to gather themselves together. This arises from an instinct of that self-preservation which is said to be the first law of nature. That in union there is strength seems to be a fixed principle in nature; and men, as well as silly sheep, own its power. And in this they are right, for seldom, if ever, does the wolf attack the flock, but contents himself with picking off the straggler.

Grafton had early seen that although the banding together of men alike interested in securing freedom from the encroachments of power was of itself a favorable sign, it was still only a sign, and that in order to the full success of the movement with which he was connected it was essential that the whole body should become unified and fully convinced regarding a policy which should be pursued. Lacking this and wanting a common line of action the power of their organization would be frittered away and lost, while if concentrated upon a policy agreed upon, and steadily and persistently supported, would surely end in placing full power to right their wrongs, in their own hands. He had seen that the history of organizations showed that they had always been maligned and misrepresented in the beginning, which had little effect except to increase the number of adherents. But that after numbers had been secured, open opposition ceased, and false hearted words of praise took its place and the work of insidious division began. Then it was that men who should have been united were

made to quarrel and separate by the introduction of jealousies and prejudices in no wise connected with the main objects of association.

In his lectures to the Alliance, Grafton had made a special point of the power of the State as a means of securing the reforms which the farmers desired. Most had looked to the general government as the power which must be invoked, but Grafton pointed out the difficulty of securing the necessary majorities in a government representing so great an extent of country, so many, and varied interests and also the fact that by the close balancing of power secured by the wily politicians, that the large cities possessed this balance and that their purchasable vote would most certainly be cast against them. On account of these and other reasons he showed the immense difficulty of securing radical reform beginning with the general government.

In a State like Kansas, however, peopled by farmers and dominated by the agricultural interest, with no large city within its borders, he showed that concert of action among the farmers would necessarily result in gaining at once the full control of affairs. They constituted a majority of the inhabitants of the State and if united in their demands could at once secure whatever they demanded. Nothing but a division in their ranks could prevent this and this would undoubtedly be the only means used by the opposition to defeat them.

The following summary of his views is taken from the manuscript notes of one of his addresses.

A friend of mine, an old Kansan, but born and reared in the Keystone State, visited the home of his boyhood, in Pennsylvania, last Summer. Meeting a former playmate, now a wealthy man and proprietor of half the little town, he said to him:

"You are in the banking and loaning business you tell me; what rates do you obtain for money here?"

"Well," said the capitalist, "we loan money at low rates; on real estate security at very low rates; I have known of much money being loaned at four per cent, fact is I have loaned at that myself, when everything was all right."

"But," said the Kansan, "why don't you come out to Kansas where you could get two or three times as much interest? Our farmers in——county pay a nominal rate of eight to ten per cent, but when their commissions and rebates are all footed up it is often from twelve to sixteen that they really pay."

Relating this to me the Kansan said: "My friend would make me no answer, but instead said: 'Take a ride with me this afternoon, I want to show you my new fast stepper and we will take a spin out among the farms.' In due time my old schoolmate drove up to the house where I was stopping, in a splendid 'rig,' with a horse which even Bonner might admire. Seating myself beside him we were soon among the highly cultivated fields of——county. Driving along the 'ridge' road, he stopped for a moment that we might admire the scenery. Spread out in the sunlight, below and upon our right was a glorious sight, an 'intervale' farm in the highest state of cultivation. Clean-kept fields, divided by straight lines of well-built stone walls, some of them being whitewashed, that by the contrast of green fields and white fences the beauty of the scene might be enhanced. Blooded cattle of beautiful proportions cropped the rich grass in one of the enclosures. A well built mansion embowered in trees and shrubbery was upon one side and near by, the enormous 'bank barn,' built of stone in the most substantial manner, added its solidity and air of stability and prosperity to the view.

" 'There,' said my old schoolmate, 'ain't

that a pretty sight, can you beat that in Kansas?"

"I was obliged to confess that we could not. 'But,' said I, 'who owns this farm?'"

" 'This morning,' said he, 'I did not answer your question, and I have brought you here to emphasize what I say. You remember Jim——, son of old——, the big farmer of bygone years?' I nodded, and he went on: 'Well Jim married Nancy——, a fine buxom girl, and his father gave him this farm as his patrimony and started him out in life. They seemed to be as happy as larks for a time; finally Nancy fell sick and there was a year or two of poor crops. Jim 'got behind' and came to me for a loan, and to make a long story short, I let him have \$1,000, twenty-three years ago, at four per cent. This amount was afterwards added to at the same rate and to cut the story short, I'll just tell you that now after twenty-three years of a struggle, Jim and Nancy are out in Chautauqua county, Kansas, with a houseful of children trying to make a new start. I own the farm; Jim just left it—abandoned it—I did not foreclose on him—but he just couldn't pay and had to go.'

"Now you see the reason why I don't care to go to Kansas to loan money at higher rates. I can get the land at four per cent, but I don't want it. It won't pay the cost of the farmer's living in any decent fashion and four per cent beside, and there are no better farms in America than these. I own more of them, I wish I didn't, and so I surely don't want Kansas mortgages. It is a dead sure thing at the rates you mention, but I have my notions and don't care to invest."

Debt and the payment of interest is the main reason of the increasing wealth of the rich and the growing poverty of the poor. Laws regarding the rate of interest are quickly nullified by the necessities of the borrower, and the avarice of the lender and the only final and radical cure of the

trouble which now threatens our civilization is the abolition of debt. And this is not only possible but easily arrived at whenever the people are sufficiently aroused to take an active part in securing so desirable a reform.

One half of the trap into which the people of Kansas have fallen is provided by Wall street but the other side is furnished by the laws of Kansas and whenever the debt cursed people of Kansas get up spirit enough to hold their side level, then the "jaws" will fail to come together and the machine will be out of joint.

Then Congress will discover for the first time that something must be done and they never will move in our behalf until this is done. Mark that.

Let a Legislature be elected with sand enough to pass a stay law and also to abrogate all laws for the collection of debts to be incurred in the future and the beginning of the end will be at hand, but unless this can be done the machine for the manufacture of paupers will continue to grind out an ever increasing supply.

Many plans of relief are presented nearly all of which are based upon the action of Congress, but years of entire inaction regarding the true interests of the producing classes with hundreds upon hundreds of enactments for the benefit of the people's enemies, testify to the willingness of Congress to injure and oppress and its entire forgetfulness of the rights and privileges of the great plain people. All who are willing to open their eyes are well aware that our Congress is the mere creature of the monopolists, who by their control of purchasable votes in our large cities, can and do laugh in their sleeves at the efforts of the "grangers" to retrieve their waning fortunes. Those "plans" which depend entirely upon congressional action for relief are at present inoperative, for the good and sufficient reason that congress, as at

present organized, instead of affording relief, will probably, at the command of its Wall Street masters, inflict still greater injuries upon the farming interest. And even though a congress, to be elected in the future should be willing to consider the wrongs which are so grievous and hard to be borne, it must be remembered that that election is still far in the future and the seating of the men elected a year beyond even that. Meantime every possible effort will be made by the politicians to control and delay, browbeat, cajole and deceive the people. Men whose memories run back for only a dozen years will not forget that the politicians of both the great parties, in the west, "whereased" and resolved as strongly against national banks and monopolies as it was possible for them to do. By these means they gained control of that reformatory movement and traitorously strangled it. In like manner they propose to "fool the grangers" again.

Their leaders laugh at the power of the people and repeat slyly among themselves to-day, as they did twelve years ago: "Intelligence ever has and ever will rule stupidity."

They expect to repeat the doings of the past and if given an opportunity will surely succeed in their designs. Meantime the only reliance of the farmer should be upon himself and his vote and until he is willing to exert himself, by the passage of such laws in his own State as will bring him temporary relief, he will be despised and contemptuously regarded by the powers that reign in Wall Street and at Washington. And if he will not help himself and dares not undertake radical action on his own behalf "the powers that be" are right in their treatment of him, for in that event he is a despicable creature and less than man.

Debt is what is ruining us; more money is being paid as interest on money than all the surplus crops of the State are selling for. The result is certain ruin.

What happens to the man or the community that pays out more than is received? Is it not a clear case that the community doing this must "succumb?" And the time is but short. This year this one is sold out; the next another, and in a few years all who depend upon the soil will have been forced to abandon their homes by as heartless a power as ever peeped with blood-shot eyes over the battlements of hell. The State passes laws against lotteries, which take only a few dollars here and there from willing hands, but it forces by all the power at its command a tribute of millions, reducing our people to abject beggary and in this game, as at present conducted, we have no chance to win. When a man has been forced by the combinations about him to mortgage his farm, it is his no more. The mortgage is a conditional sale. Read it and see. And little time soon takes away the pretense that the transfer is not final. Here and there a man may pay off a mortgage; here and there a man may draw a prize, but in general the one is as rare as the other. The Louisiana lottery has a long list of its beneficiaries. In the large, and taken as a whole, the people have no chance to pay their debts, for the same grasping power which has them by the throat has also by increasing the value of money decreased the price of the crops with which they are alone able to liquidate the demands upon them. From this condition of affairs the farmers of the West demand relief, and they demand it now. They cannot wait a long term of years for a gradual change; their necessities demand action at once. They wish to pay all they owe. They do not desire to defraud. But they must have time to make the best use of the materials in their hands. They must not be hounded into a forced sale of the results of years of toil at the demand of heartless holders of bonds and mortgages.

Let the farmers agree upon their demands and plans; let them be discussed in

the Alliance, duly formulated and printed. Let each candidate for the legislature and for all State offices be requested by a duly constituted committee from the Alliance, in each county, to sign a written promise, to be retained by the Alliance, promising under oath if need be, to support and defend the demands of the farmers. Then in each county let the solid vote of the farmers be cast for the candidates selected by the Alliance as most likely to serve the farmer's purpose best. When the legislature thus elected meets, let the Alliance send a powerful committee to attend its session. Let them see that promises are kept, or drag the liars from their seats.

The power of the legislature thus elected, and composed of men having half the spirit of the old continental Congress, would be able to make amends in due time for the errors of the past. Other States would quickly follow our example; indeed under the direction of the Alliance the same plans could be and would be, set in motion in half a dozen States at once. Let a stay law be passed, stopping the collection of debts, as has been done at different times in several of the States of the Union.

It is idle to say to Shylock, as was said by the debtor of old, "Have mercy upon me and I will pay thee all;" he knows nothing of mercy, he knows only of business, under which name he is ready to crucify every high and holy feeling, every demand of mercy, and all the pleadings of love and justice. Let us say rather to him: "You shall not carry out your scheme and take from this man his farm without giving the holder opportunity to redeem it. You shall not consign these helpless women and children to a life of poverty and shame, that the greed of foreign and Eastern money lenders may be satisfied with the life blood of innocence. Your claim shall be paid but you shall not close your victims out at forced sale.

Pass a stay law, then the drain of inter-

est money would be stopped. Money received for crops would circulate at home, business would be brought down to a cash basis at once. Merchants would be the first to thrive and a solid base be reached. The business of money loaners and lawyers alone would suffer. Very good, let us turn the thing around for a time, the whole people have suffered for their benefit long enough. Repeal all laws for the collection of debts incurred in the future. This would spoil the lawyer's trade. Very good, they have lived upon spoil; give them some of their own medicine. Business would then come down to a cash basis. Debt would be eliminated from the social fabric, and with debt would go the cause of modern slavery. Shakspeare is good authority among cultivated men for the use of language and he declares that the debtor is a slave. The modern slave is made what he is by debt. Solomon said many centuries ago, "the borrower is the servant of the lender." Let us abolish service by doing away with the power of the master. Horace Greeley said years ago that there was no more reason, in real justice, why a man should have his credits, and the result of his over-reachings collected by force for him, by the law, than there was for him to require the sheriff to black his boots.

Pass such laws in one State and the money devil would be alarmed and begin to make concessions. Pass them in a half a dozen and he would know that the time of the redemption of humanity from modern slavery drew nigh. Pass such laws and as business came to a cash basis and credit was done away, a demand would arise for the circulation of more money. Let the legislature demand that our senators advocate the issue of money direct to the people and without the intervention of banks. If they refused, declare their places vacant and order them home for trial. Indict and punish them. Put a stop to political shilly shallying. Elect

new senators; send them to Washington. Their voices would be heard. Let a half dozen States agree upon this course and the end of class rule would come. The majority would rule and the little circles who profit by the injustice and crime of the present would be relegated to that subordinate position to which Christianity consigns them. Immense difficulties must be encountered before this programme can be carried out. The power of money and of the press, the power of the church and the rostrum will largely be against you, but with you is the great power of the everlasting God of justice and of right. "They that be with us, be more than they that be against us." In other directions, not here mentioned, the power of the State acting within the law could be used to enforce the demands which are necessary to the pecuniary well being of ninety-nine out of every hundred bona fide residents of Kansas. Because they could not combine, four millions of blacks were held in chattel slavery. We have been wont to say that white men would not have been thus controlled. We have no occasion to boast of our superiority over the blacks while one in a hundred, by the power of money, controls us. Lack of combination among the blacks kept them in slavery as it will white men. Combine then, come together, and pledge to each other as your fathers did "your lives, your fortunes and your sacred honor." You will be denounced as revolutionists. Were not they? Is it not their proud distinction that they were revolutionary? Have you forgotten that Washington was a rebel? that every member of the Continental Congress was guilty of treason, if judged by British law. But for you the overt act is not necessary, keep within the law, do injustice to no man or class. Pay every debt and fulfill every contract, remembering that they who cry for justice must do no wrong. But do not be deceived, the new revolution is for the

abolition of debt. Old debts must be paid, but the law must set its face against the formation of new ones. Whoever sells property or loans money in the future let him do it at his own risk. The law should not guarantee his business to be profitable any more than the State should make the cornfield or the potato patch of the farmer sure to yield a certain number of bushels. Let every transaction be finished at the time of its completion. Abolish debt, and pay cash, in every deal. The government can readily furnish the currency to do this and only refrains from it now, at the bidding of those who secure slaves by the creation of debt. We do not need new laws so much as a repeal of those conferring privilege. Take away from the trade of the money grabber and debt maker the power of the sheriff and the court or else furnish to the farmer a *posse comitatus* with sufficient power to secure the growth of corn for three hundred and sixty-five days in the year and a stated price at the end of that time from the buyer under penalty of loss of goods and confiscation of property in case of failure.

Who is most worthy of the protection of the law, the producer of wealth or him who seeks to obtain by shrewdness what others have painfully toiled to grow?

Debt and the payment of interest in our modern world make the master and make the slave. This is the great power which threatens humanity and which must be slain.

In the new abolition the power of the State government will be the lever which shall lift us from the slough of despond. Local self government is the distinctive feature of our republic. But for this, the war of the rebellion would have ended upon this continent. No conquered people were ever before reduced to subjection without an enormous standing army was continued as a guard. Generation after generation but added fuel to the flame. Poland still threatens. After centuries of

government by the sword, Ireland still longs for revenge. If at the close of our war the States of the South had been abolished and the country held as conquered territory, as was proposed, a million of men would still be in arms to keep it in subjection. Grown familiar with the control of the General, military despotism would soon have swallowed all.

But with the power of the State in their hands, eleven miniature republics, self-governed and self-respecting, at once arose in the South and satisfied the natural demand of freemen for self-control. Now, a foreign war would show them as loyal to the nation as the States of the North.

The State governments saved our form of government in that crisis and will do it again in another. They form the power which would prevent the successful seizure of the national government by an ambitious tyrant. Their very diversity of interests form an additional security. Each is a miniature nation in embryo, full formed and ready to be born.

Kansas, under the guidance of men of nerve, such as her early history knew, men like Jim Lane and Ossawatimie Brown, can and will take the lead in a new abolition—the abolition of debt.

The great danger of the present is that reformers may compromise the true principles of action. An increase in the amount of money in circulation would relieve for a time the overburdened people, but in a few years, if debt, the cause of all our woes, is allowed to live and breed, the earth will be covered with a swarming brood of paupers, spawned from the hatcheries of usury.

Debt is the cause and the excuse of usury and usurers. Kill the dragon which continually sows among men the seeds of avarice, hate, crime, disease and death. Destroy at one blow the source of inequality—usury—accursed of God and all good men. Away with it and man will be freed from the yoke of bondage, To destroy

usury kill the beast which daily, hourly and momentarily is bringing it forth from its hated womb. Prevent the possibility of debt and the mother of usury is dead and she who alone can bring it forth will be no more.

CHAPTER XV.—SORROW.

IFE at the Grafton cottage had lost its charm. Charlie was fretful and querulous at times, apparently without cause. He wanted this or that—until he got it—and was contented with nothing long. Sister must help him find the ball which he had lost, or assist in his game of marbles, and unwearied as she was in his behalf, when not attending upon her mother's wants or engaged in the daily round of household cares, which now absorbed much of her time, yet it seemed impossible for him to be the contented, happy child of the past. That his mother was ill was occasion for sorrow with him, when in her presence, but grown familiar with her absence from the kitchen, where her waking hours had mostly been spent, he soon forgot it all, or so it seemed, and yet he was unhappy, why he could not tell.

Whoever has seen a fretful, crying infant, in its overtaxed and discouraged mother's arms, taken from her who should have been its chief joy and source of comfort, by the possessor of even tempered, vigorous health, and seen the quivering lip, the fretful sob and the injured air of the child quickly disappear and give place to the happy chuckle and the exultant crow, can well believe that little mortals, at least, are dependent upon the mental states of those with whom they are associated. And are we not taught by the occurrences of our every day life, that children of a larger growth and maturer years are even more dependent upon those with whom they come in contact for the color of their thoughts? Who has not seen the harsh and tyrannous severity of a father poison the air of every nook and cranny of the

household? And does not the circle of joy or sorrow spread throughout the domain of mind?

The beat of a drum sets in motion the waves of air which carry to every ear in the village the tidings that a certain piece of leather has been struck. It is as nothing, a trifle, a mere circumstance, and yet the impact of the wood upon the stretched hide has made its impression upon the intelligence of every soul in the town. Science convinces us of the impossibility of loss in the material world. Matter may be changed in form, disappear in invisible gases, to return in other forms and shapes, but it is not lost; it cannot escape the control of that vast intelligence which governs us all. Mind surely controls matter. In our modern world the mind of civilized man has almost completed the conquest of the physical earth, and in the conflict which has been and is being waged for control, mind is certain of ultimate victory. The greater force prevails.

In the physical world the science of our time has shown the relationship existing between the powers of earth and air; light, heat and motion are but one force upon which depend all the manifestations of nature's varied show. Do not analogy, the occurrences of life and the facts of our experience also show the continuity of thought? Is not the brotherhood of man assured? Separated though they may be by the animosities gendered by the jarring wants and jealousies of an animal existence, does not the heart of man beat responsive to the call of a better and a higher nature? The sight of human agony melts the stoniest heart. Who did not wish to assist the victim of Johnstown or Chicago? And as surely as the drum beat sets in motion the waves of air, so surely does thought impress itself upon the world of mind. Men have a common origin and their souls are but One.

Some are deaf and cannot hear, some are blind and cannot see, and some have lost

the feeling of kinship which allies them to the race, and as the blind and deaf are shut out from the pleasures of life so they who have repudiated the bond of brotherhood, are, while this continues, shut out from communion with those higher powers which shall alone endure.

Mrs. Grafton had gradually become weaker and still weaker, as time passed on. She did not complain, but had apparently abandoned all hopes of relief at mortal hands. At times her mind wandered and the poor, tired, discouraged woman, became again, in thought, a little child. Again she trod the joyous paths of youth, wandered beside the running brook her childhood knew and gathered the flowers which in imagination she saw. Seated about her bed, although heart-broken in their anguish, Grafton and his daughter were forced to join in thought with her.

"Ah there is such a beauty; Mary help me to get it, it is there near you."

"Here mother, it is," said Mary, and although the hand which touched her mother's contained no visible thing the want of the moment was filled.

"See, isn't it lovely; look at the beautiful colors; ah how nice to be here."

As the thin wan face of the rapidly aging woman was lighted up by what should have been a smile, but which only served to show the distraction of a mind diseased, bitter tears filled the eyes of the beholders. But she saw them not. Occupied with the conceit, her mind took no note of things as they were; she only saw what her disordered brain bade her observe. Suddenly, perhaps, the scene with her would change and hysterical tears flow from unnatural eyes. For the moment nothing could allay her fears. Then as suddenly as it came the paroxysm would depart, to be followed by a new fancy which her family were called upon to share. During these trying times there was no relief to the anxious watchers. Her eyes constantly stared with a dreadful look which

did not change. Whether distressed by fear or overcome with simulated joy, the eyes which so long had shone with the mild radiance of approval and love, now glared with a light from which reason had departed. The joyless hours flew wearily by. Day was as night and night as day. Wearied at last, nature gave up the contest and sleep came to quell for a time the anxieties of the family. These terrible scenes left the afflicted soul each time weaker than before. Succeeded as they were by seasons of comparative rest and quiet, which yet brought no hope, no ray of returning comfort to the invalid, she gradually sank and came nearer and nearer to the end of the life to which she did not cling and for which she had ceased to care.

The doctor came occasionally and talked learnedly of anæmia and of hysterical conditions. He brought in consultation a brother physician from Branchton, who advised that upon the return of the paroxysms, large doses of opium be administered, or if this should fail, that chloroform be used to quiet the sufferer; but neither Grafton nor his daughter would listen to this. They would not, they could not hear to the thought of thus destroying sensation in the being they loved so well.

"She is not violent," said Mary, "and I will not do otherwise than I know she would wish me to do. I know she would not approve, and I cannot give my consent."

Mr. and Mrs. Ellery, as well as other friends, were constant in their efforts for the sufferer. But there was little to be done, except to sit and watch at the bedside of her who was gradually fading away. Generally she was quiet and rational and for the most part complained only of weariness. Death she longed for, and spoke only of it as a relief. She would soon be at rest. The weakness of the body had infected the mind; she cared

little for anything. Her life, she felt, had been lived. For herself she no longer participated in the thoughts of those about her. But for her child the mother-heart within her still welled up with entreaty and prayer for her boy. "God pity him he will be so lonely without me!" Calmly she spoke of her rapidly approaching death and urged again and again that Mary would remember the charge she left with her.

"He will need a mother, Mary," said she; "and you must be one to him."

"You have been a good daughter, Mary, you never failed me; I know you will not in this. And your father, Mary; he will need your care; our home has been happy. He will miss me and sorrow in silence. Be a true woman, Mary, and I feel sure that somewhere and somehow we shall all be again united. Kiss me, daughter."

With streaming eyes and heaving breast the daughter clasped the worn and wasted form of the dear mother to her heart.

Again and again was this repeated and still she remained with them. Nature still refused to loose the silver cord. As she gradually became weaker the paroxysms also were less and less violent. Often had Grafton and his daughter prayed with tearful earnestness that she might die, if die she must, in peace, with all her powers of mind unimpaired and in possession at the last of those faculties which had so endeared her to them.

The turn of the tide came at last. The violence of her disease had finally expended its force. Though so worn and wasted as to bring the bitterest tears to the eyes of her husband, who so well remembered the light-hearted and beautiful girl, who years before had trustingly given her hand to him, she yet was sane. The eyes which looked lovingly into his were the same which had answered to his glance through all the years of his pilgrimage.

Hope suddenly filled his heart. She would now recover. Life had still a

charm for him. In the twinkling of an eye his thought had taken in the prospect of future years. He would slave for her, if need be; she should not be denied the advantages which he felt so lovely and gentle a soul had earned of right. For her he would dare any and all things. How precious she seemed. And as he bent over her their lips met in an ecstasy of love.

"George," said she, feebly, "I am going to leave you. You have been a good husband to me—you never deceived me—you—always loved me—God bless and keep you."

He would have interrupted her with gentle remonstrance, but suddenly the unwelcome truth was forced upon his mind, struck his new found joy ruthlessly to earth and pressed the chalice of bitter despair to his lips.

"Call Mary," feebly said the dying woman—"I feel—as though—I should faint."

Mary had been gone but a moment, she was in the adjoining room. Grafton hurriedly called her; she came at once. The mother looked lovingly at her; essayed to lift her hand for a last farewell; the light of life departed from her eyes, the dear head fell wearily, and she was dead.

Evil and its influence finally perishes, or in the alchemy of nature, is turned into good. The foulest deed of injustice, if remembered, becomes in time only a guide post, warning the later traveler of the pitfalls which must be shunned by him who would not sink to ruin. Hatred of wrong, so near akin to love of good, is thus implanted in the heart of man. Judas, who betrayed his Friend with a kiss, by the very detestableness of his example, helps men who may be tempted to follow in his footsteps.

But good endures. With a never fading luster it shines as the beacon-fire of victory upon the hilltops of imagination. The

first good act of recorded history still invites men and urges them up and on. And the quiet lives and unseen acts which alone made that act possible each and all have played their parts and will serve the ages yet unborn.

Thus every unselfish life becomes the lasting heritage of the race.

CHAPTER XVI.—GRIEF.

WORDS cannot picture the agony and distress which overwhelmed the minds of George Grafton and his daughter at the loss of wife and mother. The thought of her death had been terrible; it was a spectre which of late had been a constant guest at their home, but the realization of the worst left them with nothing to oppose save the blackness of darkness which now shrouded their every thought. The spectre of coming evil is still a spectre; it may be escaped; it is not fully comprehended, and like a terrible dream its influence may be shaken off, in part, by the resolute, but bereavement and the ruthlessness of death strike the afflicted with a chilling force against which no resolution of the mind or argument of the intellect can avail.

Against coming evil one may summon the forces of his being and lead on to the attack. Something may be done. But who can fight against death when it is accomplished?

After all is over, defeated and defrauded of our treasure, we sink upon the sands of the arena, with nothing to oppose and nothing now to fear; we clasp our arms on thin air and spite of all our beliefs and cherished thoughts, what before was a far off whisper now becomes a wailing shriek rising and falling with the tempest of our emotions. "The dream is past and the end of all has come."

For days they scarcely went outside their door; night came, but it could not add to the gloom of their situation, and

when at last the live-long night gradually faded away and gave place to the garish light of day, they rose unrefreshed and unreconciled to begin again a contemplation of the crushing sorrow which benumbed their faculties.

The supremely selfish soul may sorrow greatly at loss of one who ministered to its comfort or pleasure. But grief of this sort is soon appeased; a new toy may be secured and thought of the old lapse, and almost forgotten. But to the unselfish and the real, desire has concerned itself with the happiness of the object of its affection. "Dear heart, is it well with thee," is the cry of the soul. And when at last rudely torn from the arms of love the spirit of our dear one has vanished and gone out, we are overwhelmed with fear of nothingness and mere oblivion. A thousand years of torment were light in comparison to this, if at their end we may again clasp the hand and look into the eyes we love.

The ancient Persians worshipped fire as a symbol of Deity. Taken from, it does not decrease. It apparently destroys all things and yet is itself never consumed. Capable of infinite division its character never changes, and while it may be transplanted to the uttermost parts, yet it ceases and determines if a suitable dwelling place be not provided. And may it not be indeed, a type and sign of the Infinite Light? But from mortal man ever goes up the cry, when from the altar of his affections the fire of life has departed, Whence and whither?

Where now is the ruddy gleam which so lately cheered the heart and delighted the sense. The fire that has gone out; where is it?

Gradually they began to feel that duty to the living required them to cease useless repining and an effort was made to assume again the duties and responsibilities of life; and this was made the more necessary by Charlie's youthful insensibility and lack of comprehension. As the form

of his mother had been lowered into her grave, he, for the first time apparently, fully realized his loss and appeared overwhelmed at what to him seemed the heartlessness of utter abandonment. His cry: "Don't let my mother be put in the ground," had brought tears to the eyes of the most careless and indifferent looker on.

Standing at the grave George Grafton supported the form of his daughter and held the hand of his boy. He stood erect; no sound escaped his lips; tears streamed from his eyes and coursed unheeded down his face, and although his vision took in the occurrences about him, he yet was occupied with the thought, which at that trying moment was turned into conviction: "We shall meet again."

The burial had occurred just at set of sun and as Grafton stood at the graveside, his little family clinging to him in an agony of grief, the spirit of the man sustained him; looking up, for the moment he was comforted, just as the rays of the departing sun struggled from behind the cloud which here obscured its brightness. And as its last beams shone full upon him, conviction was borne in upon him and fashioned itself in the thought: "My love, you are not lost."

But the exaltation of the moment soon departed. At the poor little home everything brought his loss to mind and stirred the grief which filled his heart. Days followed in which he abandoned himself to the luxury of grief.

But now the time had come when he must bestir himself and provide for the wants of his children. Charlie's boyish fancies and easy forgetfulness had been a source of trial to both father and daughter. He soon wished to be amused and his active little muscles ached at thought of further inaction. That he should so soon be able to laugh struck them with wonder and amazement as something almost akin to sacrilege. But nature always triumphs. Little by little they began to see that the

healthy activity of the boy called them from the selfish indulgence in a sorrow which could not save and which if further indulged would dishonor the wishes of her whom they mourned. Sorrowfully the thread of life was taken up and work again begun.

Mr. Ellery was among the first to call. He attempted no word of consolation but the grasp of his hand and the look of his eye told all that was worth the telling. "As you know," said he to Mary, "I am a member of the school board, and I have had a conference with my associates in which we have agreed to offer you a position in the Plainville schools. Will you accept?"

As Mary hesitated, making for the moment no reply, he continued:

"No doubt you feel at this time very little inclination to engage in any occupation, but your own good sense will tell you that employment of some kind is an absolute necessity to your own mental well being."

"Your offer is most kindly made," said Mr. Grafton, "but I scarcely see how she could accept it on account of the difficulties in the way."

"I have thought of them," said Mr. Ellery cheerfully, "and think that all can be arranged satisfactorily. You, my friend, are well fitted for some kinds of employment to which you might turn your attention, provided you were not tied to this little homestead. Mrs. Ellery and myself have talked the matter over and she was anxious to have Mary and Charlie make their home with us. We have no children, and, as much of my time is employed in my study, or in the duties of my position, she is sometimes lonely. Mary was always a favorite of hers and would be to her a most acceptable companion. The little fellow could have a home with us and go with his sister to school. Of course we are poor and have little to give, but the necessary expense of living would

be reduced for Mary and the boy, at our house. We have quite a large house and but two inhabitants."

"I am very grateful to you for your offer," said Grafton, "but I fear that may be drawing too heavily upon your generosity, and then you do not fully count the cost in such a complete change as this must bring about in your household."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Ellery, "my wife will consider it a favor to herself. Being alone so much she fears she may become morbid and selfish, and looks forward to the arrangement with the greatest of pleasure. She has long looked upon Mary as a daughter and I feel sure that if you will give the plan encouragement that she will be able to bring arguments to bear which will silence all objections."

So far Mary had not spoken. Evidently her mind was engaged in revolving the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed plan. Both Mr. Ellery and her father had spoken and now both looked to her for an expression of opinion.

"I do not see how it can be," she said. "You would have no home, father. I could not bear the thought of thus completely breaking up what was once so happy a home."

Tears came to her eyes and for a moment she was unable to proceed. Grafton himself could not resist the infection and a silence fell on all, broken only by the ill concealed sobs which Mary could not entirely suppress.

Mr. Ellery prudently withdrew, with the intention of sending his wife to still further urge the matter.

After Mr. Ellery had taken his leave Mary gave way to her feelings completely, while Grafton sat with his head resting in his hands, for the moment, irresolute and broken hearted. The wild grief of his daughter which had now broken forth afresh at thought of the final breaking up of the family, strangely affected him and completely unmanned him.

"Oh, my mother! my mother! why were you torn from us? Why could I not have been taken instead?" she wailed. Tears and sobs and broken ejaculations followed. Gradually she became calmer and endeavored to restrain herself.

Seeing that the violence of her grief had for the time expended its force, Grafton took his hat and went out.

Charlie was engaged near the house in driving little sticks into the ground in the form of a circle. As his father came out the door he called to him:

"Say, pa, come and see my little corral."

Grafton walked slowly towards the boy, saying as he drew near, "yes, I see the corral, but where are your cattle?"

"Why, don't you see them over there?" pointing, as he spoke, to half a dozen queer shaped pieces of corn cob, into which he had carefully stuck short splinters to represent legs; at least that was the explanation offered. One of the "cattle," which Charlie said was "Old Crumple," was possessed of crooked little sticks representing the old cow's crooked and ungainly horns.

The ridiculous little "cattle" made Grafton laugh before he knew it.

"How do you tell which end is the head?" said he.

"O, you just stick on the horns and that makes the head, the other end isn't?"

Grafton laughed again, and although he had made no sound and his laugh was only a larger smile, he instantly checked himself with a feeling that he had done an unseemly thing.

"Come, Charlie," said he, "let us go up to town and see what there may be in the post office for us."

The home of the Graftons was, as has been stated, just in the outskirts of the village of Plainville and as it was only about a quarter of a mile to the post office the walk was not unsuited to the little fellow's abilities.

As he walked along, the clear bracing air and the childish talk of his boy grad-

ually produced their effects upon the mind of the man and although he replied to the boy and kept up a desultory conversation with him, his mind was really engaged in turning over the proposition made by Mr. Ellery; and the conclusion which he quickly reached, if indeed it had not been reached before, was, that for Mary the offer was exceptionally advantageous. Mrs. Ellery was a cultivated woman of equable temperament and most charitable disposition, and although he had at first thought that the plan might have been proposed solely as a sort of semi-charity to an afflicted family, further reflection satisfied him that the arrangement with a young woman of Mary's capabilities and generous disposition might prove as much of a help to the Ellerys as to herself.

Arrived at the post-office he sat down to read some letters which were given him. Charlie sat on a nail-keg by his side eagerly engaged in noting the peculiarities of Mr. Baker's various customers.

Grafton had been one of the earliest organizers among the farmers of the Alliance. Having taken an active part he had gradually come to be considered as one of the fathers of the organization and had been elected by that body as a "Lecturer." Holding this position he had been called upon to deliver addresses at different places, but of late, on account of his wife's illness and death, he had not been able to leave home. Two of the letters were from places at a distance urging him to come once more and take up the work.

He had barely finished reading his letters and was folding up the last one he had read when, Mr. Greene, the State President of the farmers' organization came hurriedly into the store.

"Hello, Grafton," said he, "I've just come from your house."

"Why, so have I," said he.

"Well, I missed you on the way, somehow, I suppose."

"When did you come in?"

"Why just a little while ago on the last train and I bolted right down to your house, which a boy showed me. Your daughter said she thought you were here, and so it proved. Say Grafton, I've got some work for you," said he.

CHAPTER XVII.—THE NEW HOME.

"WELL, what is it?" said Grafton.

"Well, it is rather a long story to tell all the whys and wherefores, but to cut it short, the executive board have come to the conclusion to take a forward step and make an organized effort to secure what we have been 'resoluting' about so long. Resolutions cut no figure whatever, except to draw the attention and fix the thoughts of men upon a definite method; and as a matter of fact most resolutions don't even do that. An average crowd is satisfied with swelling periods and eloquent words, which really are only used to deceive. Now we have come to the conclusion that we have got through with the 'whereases' and 'be it resolveds' and have got to do something. Some of our men want to be resolute some more and are most afraid of doing something, but the time never will come, I guess, when all men can see exactly alike. Anyhow, the board has made up its mind to go ahead with a definite plan. It is plain that we can only get what we want by political action; by the election of men who will carry out our wishes, and the next thing is to elect them. But first we must be agreed as to what we want them to do when elected. The members of the board after a good deal of argument among themselves have come to an agreement upon a general plan, very near like that in your address, which was published in some of the papers, as you remember. The next thing is to carry it out, and a resolution was passed which in effect brought me here as a committee of one to induce you to undertake a mission. You

are to visit every county alliance in the State, and as many sub-alliances as possible, deliver an address advocating the proposed plan of campaign, answer objections, and otherwise forward the work the board has undertaken. The board will direct you from time to time regarding minor matters and will see that you are paid for your services. There, that's the whole story."

"Well, that is a mission, sure enough," said Grafton "How much time will be employed in all that?"

"O, that's hard to tell. You have held the position of State Lecturer, are well known and are just the man for this special business. The board will engage you until the annual meeting and I make no question that you can then be elected as State Lecturer again and kept constantly at work."

"Well, Greene, that strikes me rather favorably just at this time, fact is I was undetermined what course to take. Seems strange, though, that you should come just now."

"Oh, no, nothing strange about that. I heard of your recent affliction and thought that now you would be able to leave home. I should have come to see you before if I hadn't known that it was impossible for you to leave."

"There is more in this than you know," said Grafton, "Only to-day was an offer made that will place my children in a comfortable home and make it possible for me to leave them with a feeling of security and satisfaction."

"These so-called coincidences are sometimes wonderful as mere happenings," said Mr. Greene, "but somehow I've an idea that affairs move on a regular plan. Each man only sees one act in the play and can't make head or tail to it; he only reads one chapter in the story and thinks the villain is having too good a time of it and that the good men and women are not sufficiently appreciated, but my notion is that when we

are able to read the book clear through we'll see that things are managed for us. The idea that man is the only thing in the whole universe not bound by exact law, from which there is no escape, is foolishness to me. Everything else is. And I believe man's moral nature is as completely subject to the laws which control mind, as his body is to what we call natural law. If a man puts his finger in the fire it will be burned, sure, and the size of the burn will depend upon the amount of fire applied to it. And the operation of law in the moral world is just as absolute and its penalties just as sure as in the other case. Error leaves its impress upon a man's mind. He may get "forgiveness" but the scars of the conflict all remain and the effect will be seen somewhere, either in his children or elsewhere. If he can't see the scars his neighbors can.

"People misunderstand what is meant by 'forgiveness.' A child plays with matches, contrary to its mother's command. It gets burned. The mother comes home and the child by this time is 'sorry' and pleads to be forgiven. Well, the mother pardons the fault and 'forgives' the child. But, mind you, that don't interfere with the burn a mite. It is right there. And if one-third of the surface of the child's body is burned it will die, and forgiveness don't cut the slightest figure in the result. If the burns are not extensive enough to cause death, and only leave an unsightly scar, possibly the mother may love the child, or pity it—which is much the same thing—better for the burn. But the child has actually lost something which it can never regain. The mother will never have quite the same confidence in it again, for one thing, and if the burn is serious enough to destroy the usefulness of the child's body in any way, forgiveness won't mend the loss. Now there are men walking around, just loaded down with moral scars which destroy their usefulness, who, because they imagine

themselves forgiven—say, Grafton, this never will do. Why, I actually was preaching."

"Come home with me and we will talk this matter of the mission over," said Grafton, "you can't go back until to-morrow anyway."

"Charlie," said Grafton, "you run on ahead and tell sister that Mr. Greene is coming home with me. We will be along directly."

When Grafton and his friend arrived at the cottage, they were met by Charlie who came out a little way to meet them.

"Mrs. Ellery is in the house," said he, "she came to see sister."

"I'll not go in just yet," said Mr. Greene, "Charlie will show me his pig first. I see you have some pigs; which one is yours?"

Charlie led the way to the pig pen anxious to show Mr. Greene which one he called his, tell him what its name was and describe its peculiarities.

Grafton went at once into the house. As he entered, Mrs. Ellery and Mary were sitting close together; Mrs. Ellery had her arm around Mary, who was actually smiling, although her eyes bore evidence of recent tears.

"I came right down as soon as Mr. Ellery came home and told me that he had been here," said Mrs. Ellery, speaking to Grafton, "and I am so glad I did. I can sympathize with Mary perfectly; my mother died when I was quite young and although it is now years ago, it seems but yesterday to me. Mary has promised to come up in the morning to see me and we can then arrange all the particulars of her coming to us—that is, if you don't object, Mr. Grafton."

"You don't know how grateful I am to you, Mrs. Ellery, for the offer made," said Grafton warmly, "but I can't help feeling some misgivings in relation to the matter."

"Yes, of course, I should expect it, but we can put it in this way: Mary can have

a place in the school as long as she pleases, no doubt; everybody loves her and she will then be self-supporting. She can board with us and keep Charlie with her. Should this arrangement come to an end, another can be made, never fear. But I want her near me. Here, everything brings her loss constantly to mind and it would unfit her for the place which I believe she will yet fill."

As Grafton made no immediate reply, Mrs. Ellery bustled about in a kindly, motherly fashion, putting on "her things," as she prepared to go.

"Put on your sunbonnet, Mary, and go a piece with me," said she.

As the ladies stepped out of the door, Grafton rose, went into the little kitchen and began to build a fire in the stove, that it might be ready for Mary when she returned, to use in getting supper. While he was busy at this, Charlie came in, leading Mr. Greene by the hand, busily engaged meantime in giving that gentleman a full account not only of the pigs but also of other matters in which he was interested.

Mary soon returned and busied herself with the preparation of the evening meal. Mr. Greene was interested in a book and comfortably seated in the "living room" while Grafton still remained in the kitchen. Softly closing the door between the rooms, Grafton said to his daughter:

"It seems to me, Mary, that it will be just the thing for you, at this time, at any rate, to take up with the offer of the Ellerys."

For the moment she made no reply, indeed she felt that she could scarcely trust herself to speak, and kept busily at work; presently she said:

"Everything seems to point to the arrangement as the best that can be made."

"Well, then," he said, "we will understand that you undertake the school. I will sell off our little stock of movable property and can let you have some money, which you will need. If worst

comes to worst, we can at least come back here."

Grafton rejoined his friend in the other room and before the evening was over it was arranged between them that within two weeks he should report to Mr. Greene, as the president of the executive board, for duty.

The next morning Mr. Greene took his departure, well pleased in having secured the active co-operation of the one man whom he thought fully capable of conducting the work undertaken by the organization of which he was the head.

Having made up his mind, Grafton was not the man to long delay in the execution of his plans; but actively set to work to make the necessary preparations for carrying into effect the plan in view. As soon as breakfast was over and his guest had departed, he went at once to see parties whom he thought might buy the property he was now anxious to sell.

After Mary had finished her morning work she put on a neatly fitting black dress, combed her luxuriant brown hair with more than her usual care and taking Charlie by the hand, set out for the promised call upon Mrs. Ellery. As she locked the door of the little cottage and turned away from its silent and melancholy walls it was with difficulty at first that she could proceed. Thoughts of the past, now gone forever, came over her with great and most depressing force. But she was young and healthful, the morning air was invigorating and as Charlie, with the thoughtless gaiety of youth, kept up a cheerful and enlivening conversation in which she was forced to join, she had not gone far until she felt her spirits rise and much of that dead weight depart, which so long had pressed with crushing heaviness upon her heart. On the way she met a number of her acquaintance all of whom greeted her with interest and plain evidence of good will in their countenances. This could not fail of its effect. The hu-

man heart is hungry for sympathy and without it the half of life is lost.

Meeting "Uncle Bill" she stopped for a moment, "Good morning, Mr. Welden," said she.

"I am awful glad to see you looking so well this morning," said he, "I believe you are getting prettier all the time."

Mary blushed, and with some slight confusion said: "Now, Mr. Welden, you really are a flatterer. I didn't think it of you."

"Oh well," said he, "I am an old man, and half of the time I have a sneaking notion that I'm an old fool, but there is no flattery in that."

As Mary continued her walk the old man turned to look after her, saying to himself as he did so, "she is a pretty woman, that's a fact." Going into his house which was near by he told his wife, "That girl of Grafton's is going to make some man's heart ache 'fore long, or I miss my guess."

Arriving at the Ellerys, Mary and Charlie were in the midst of a pleasant chat as Mrs. Ellery, having seen them coming, appeared at the door, and drawing Mary's arm within her own, ushered her at once into the sitting-room.

It contained a stranger. A tall, broad-shouldered young man of light complexion and expressive face was engaged in conversation with Mr. Ellery.

"Mr. Maitland," said Mrs. Ellery, "this is my young friend, Mary Grafton; she was not aware that any one was present or, I dare say she would not have come in."

Mr. Maitland rose with easy grace and politely acknowledged the introduction.

"Mr. Maitland is the son of my old townsman and college classmate," said Mr. Ellery, "who has just arrived this morning rather unexpectedly. He is on a pleasure trip at present and happened in, as we say. I don't know of anybody, George, who could give me more pleasure by a visit than yourself, unless indeed, it should be your father."

Mrs. Ellery had by this time removed Mary's hat. The morning walk and the unexpected meeting with a cultivated stranger, had caused the native rose to flush upon her cheek and dispell the pallor which of late had prevented its appearance. Mr. Ellery wondered that he had not noticed before that she was really a beautiful woman. He had thought her an interesting and intelligent girl, pretty perhaps, but now his eyes were opened and he was surprised.

The look of the stranger clearly showed that he too was impressed. He was a gentleman, he did not stare, but his occasional glances betrayed the feeling of interest and admiration which he could not conceal.

Mr. Ellery's conversation and Mrs. Ellery's officious pleasantries prevented any feeling of embarrassment on Mary's part, while Charlie unnoticed by all, sat bolt upright on one of Mrs. Ellery's "stuffed chairs" and looked first at one and then another. Evidently he didn't understand the situation.

CHAPTER XVIII.—DUTY.

MR. MAITLAND was the only son and heir of a wealthy Massachusetts manufacturer, who had been the early friend and classmate at college of Mr. Ellery. At graduation the paths of the two had separated Maitland entering business with his father, while Ellery began the study of divinity at Andover. After his graduation at Andover he had settled for some years in Massachusetts, and the friends had kept up an intimacy, which upon Mr. Ellery's removal to the West had been interrupted and with the exception of the very rare visits of Mr. Ellery to the old Massachusetts home had now almost ceased. The younger Maitland was also an alumnus of the same college at which his father had passed what he now looked backward to as four of his happiest years. At his gradu-

ation he was entirely undetermined regarding the course of life which he should adopt. He was a generous hearted youth, who having never been obliged to exert himself, on account of his father's growing wealth, had so far pursued the even tenor of his way without meeting with opposition sufficient to determine what his real character might yet prove to be. Possessed of a stalwart frame he was also indebted to nature for an equable temper and cheery good sense. That he was an optimist looking upon the brighter side of life was a matter of course. His mental constitution and a certain native pride of character had largely kept him from the follies of youth without much effort or serious thought on his part.

The elder Maitland although surrounded with luxury and happy in his domestic relations, still felt that his life had not been fully and entirely successful. At times he felt stirring within him the old youthful desire to leave behind him a name; something which would prove to the world that his life had not been in vain; that he had at least done something towards making the world a better place of residence for those who might come after him. Immersed, however, in the cares of business, these thoughts, stimulated as they occasionally were by a visit or a letter from his old friend Ellery, had taken no serious and positive direction at the time of his son's graduation at Amherst. The father had attended the Commencement exercises and in listening to the orations and disquisitions of the young and ardent souls, about to launch bravely forth upon the sea of life, had again come under the generous influences which swell the youthful heart with hope and pride and fill it with the glorious spirit of endeavor. Once more the thoughts and aspirations of his younger days came over him; he remembered the impulses of his own youth and was obliged sorrowfully to own to himself that judged by the standards then set up that his life

had been a failure. What great thing had he accomplished? True, he had accumulated wealth, but in this accumulation he certainly had benefited no one but himself. Had he really done even this? The smooth and placid countenance of his old friend Ellery came up before his mind and he could not fail to contrast the peaceful expression of his old classmate's face with the furrowed visage which the mirror showed him as his own. Was not his wealth a damage even to his own son? A clever young man with good natural abilities he yet was without a motive in life. Like a ship at sea without a rudder, that he carried a valuable cargo but added to the loss and ruin of the final and inevitable shipwreck. Should he make of his son a man of business like himself? But had he not already acknowledged himself a failure, and should he continue in his son what he now regretted in himself? Why should he? Was his wealth not sufficient? Why then should his son spend his life in delving for more?

With him, to resolve was to act. And on the journey home he took occasion to speak seriously of the future and of his desire that his son should succeed where he himself had failed. "Live for something, my son," said he; "have a purpose in life, beyond the mere gratification of the sensual and natural wants of the body. This is the life of the beast. For the beast it may be wise. If man is above the beast, his thought should pursue a higher aim. And even without regard to the future, the man of generous emotions can never be satisfied with himself and his life, unless he is able to see that he has rendered active and acceptable service to his fellows.

"And if we base our actions here upon the hope of another world beyond this, we cannot forget that Jesus in his description of the final judgment and its awards, made them conform wholly and entirely to the results of our action here and its effect upon the material well being of our fellow

creatures. 'Propheying in thy name' and doing 'wonderful works' seemed to cut no figure there. Actual results in the betterment of the conditions which surround humanity in this world were required. 'I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat' is the sentence which he passed upon people who seem to have thought that they ought to have been received, and I know of no one having authority to remit what he explicitly, and in many places, has demanded."

Although the elder Maitland had left his son free to choose the manner of life he would lead, his own high sense of fealty to the race had induced him after due reflection to take up the study of divinity with the intention of finally entering the ministry. And this had been accomplished, and at the time of his visit he had finished his studies and been licensed as a preacher, although he had never been settled as pastor. During the progress of his studies at Andover, doubts had arisen in his mind regarding the doctrines there taught and he had become somewhat unsettled in his views. Seizing upon this as a favorable opportunity he had resolved to spend some time in travel before he began the work of life, regarding which he now felt some misgivings.

This then was the man whom we have now introduced to our readers. He had never been in the West and Kansas and her people were alike new and strange to him.

After a little time spent in general conversation Mrs. Ellery said:

"Mr. Maitland, you will please excuse us; here in the West we are our own servants you know and therefore not entirely the mistresses of our own time; no doubt Mr. Ellery will now have some one who can fully sympathize with him."

No sooner had the ladies got away from the sound of the voices of the two gentlemen, now busily engaged in telling and hearing news from "old Amherst," than Mary said:

"Now, Mrs. Ellery, what made you take me into that room?"

"Why my dear, Mr. Maitland had just said that the people of the West, whom he had seen, did not impress him very favorably, and I was anxious to show him that we really had some nice people residing here, and from his manner I fancy that he will now acknowledge that he was too swift in his judgment."

Mary blushed; it was a new experience to her, and for the moment the thought that she had been paraded as a specimen was rather unpleasant. And this must have appeared upon her face for Mrs. Ellery continued:

"You poor little innocent, don't take it so seriously to heart. You made a good appearance. It was plain to all that you were ignorant of his presence when I ushered you in. If any one is to blame of course it must be me, but I can't say that I feel that I have sinned. I think, however, that most women take delight in bringing together eligible young people."

The flush upon Mary's face gradually disappeared as she said:

"Don't deceive yourself. Mr. Maitland is a gentleman of wealth and position, and would only feel amusement at the mention of my 'eligibility.'"

"Don't deceive yourself, my dear," said Mrs. Ellery. "I know something of society, and of the people whom Mr. Maitland has been accustomed to meet, and I am of a very different opinion, still we will not discuss the matter further, now at any rate, as I must proceed to get my dinner. No matter how nice and refined men may be, I never found one yet that didn't like a good dinner."

Charlie long ago had taken himself out into the yard, where just now he was trying to minister to the wants of a distracted old hen. The hen, with her little brood about her, had been tied to a stake that she might not wander. Anxiety for the welfare of her downy flock had however taken

away the little judgment her foolish head contained and much fluttering had hopelessly involved her. She lay upon her side, the string many times about her and preventing further motion. Charlie was unable to extricate her and called loudly: "O Mary! come! the poor biddy can't get up."

Mary ran out the back door, and soon had poor biddy upon her feet with all her brood about her. Giving Charlie a love pat upon the cheek she charged him not to "get into mischief" and was back again in a moment. Mrs. Ellery had noted the occurrence from the window and when Mary appeared she said:

"What a dear little mother you are, to be sure."

For an instant Mary did not understand and Mrs. Ellery explained:

"Just to see how Charlie depended upon you, and how easily you managed both him and the poor old hen."

"Why shouldn't I?" said she.

"To be sure," said the elder, "it seems easy and natural to you."

Mrs. Ellery did not offer further explanation but she could not but wonder at what appeared to her as the wonderful adaptability of the young woman beside her. Of generous temper and naturally elevated thought, well read for her years, she yet was most capable and efficient in the ordinary walks and work of life. In whatever position placed she yet seemed easily to lead.

Mrs. Ellery did not know, what is yet the fact, that American character is prolific in the production of an adaptability and many sidedness, elsewhere unequaled upon the face of the earth.

As they proceeded with the work of the kitchen the proposed change was fully discussed and it was determined that when Mr. Grafton had completed his preparations, that Mary and Charlie should take up their residence with the Ellerys.

Having assisted Mrs. Ellery up to the

time when she was nearly ready to place her dinner upon the table, notwithstanding the entreaties of Mrs. Ellery to stay to dinner she took Charlie by the hand and soon was at home.

Ushered into dinner soon after, Mr. Maitland at once inquired for Miss Grafton.

"O," said Mrs. Ellery, "she wouldn't stay. I knew she wouldn't, although of course, I tried to induce her."

"She is a pretty young lady," said he.

"So then you have changed your opinion?" said Mrs. Ellery playfully; "only a little while ago you were saying that Western people did not impress you favorably."

"Of course," said he, "I spoke hastily and really without much opportunity to form an opinion."

"I think George," said Mr. Ellery, "that I can understand in part, at least, why you have spoken as you have. I know that was my impression on first coming to the West. People in Massachusetts pay far more attention to dress and appearances than here, and the average dress and manner of the men of a Western town, in the eyes of a resident of an Eastern city, appear very careless and hurried, while occasionally a prominent and worthy citizen is actually slovenly in both dress and manner. This does not arise from intentional disrespect for the forms of good breeding, but is simply owing to the newness of the country and its consequent freedom from social mannerisms. Men readily run back to first principles; our own frontiersmen thrown into contact with Indians, dress like Indians and act like them. Send a dozen college boys on a 'camping out' tour, and they very readily and naturally drop many customs which are quite indispensable at home. And so it has been with us of the West. We have followed the customs of the country, but you will find as much, if not more, sterling character and native ability among Western people as among the better dressed and

more dissembling citizens of the East. This, however, is being rapidly changed, and in our larger towns you will find great efforts made in keeping up appearances, which, after all, are very deceitful."

"No doubt that is true," said Mr. Maitland, "but you haven't told me anything about this Miss Grafton yet."

"No I haven't, I shall be obliged to turn you over to Mrs. Ellery for full information, although I can say she is rather a remarkable young person."

"We will call upon Mary to-morrow or in a day or two, if you wish," said Mrs. Ellery, secretly overjoyed at the turn affairs had taken.

"Why yes," said he, "if we can do so properly, and without violating the proprieties. I should be pleased to do so."

CHAPTER XIX.—THE STUDENT.

MR. MAITLAND seemed wonderfully attracted by Kansas scenery and people. The clear, sunny days, the lightness of the air with the consequent slightly increased respiration and natural invigoration, had for him as they have for all, when first they come under these subtle influences, a nameless charm and fascination not easily resisted.

It was a veritable wonderland to him. The prairie farms with their widespread fruitfulness, the clear blue sky, often without the faintest semblance of a cloud, the strange and peculiar effect of sunlight and shadow, unnoticed by the familiar eye, the balmy air of the early evening, untouched by the chilly dampness of the sea, the glorious panorama of the sky which nightly spread seemed increased in size and power by the clearness of the air, all had for him a pathos and a power which compelled his admiration and caused his heart to rise in thankfulness to the great and incomprehensible source of truth and beauty.

Like all true and uncorrupted souls, Maitland was in love with Nature; to him she was ever beautiful, and in the newly

seen manifestations of her loveliness he, like the true lover, found ever increasing delight.

The cynic tells us that beauty exists solely in the eye of the beholder, and even though he speak the truth, this may only serve to show and fully prove that the beclouded eye of man fails to behold what in reality exists. Taken before a painting, which causes the deepest feelings of cultivated man to struggle within him for the mastery, the painted savage sees only the many colored hues of the picture and the tinsel and polish of the frame. And does not power inhabit the creation of the artist though undetected by the savage? And do not men who call themselves civilized, go through a weary life viewing in the daily recurring panorama only the glitter and tinsel of the exterior, without ever for a moment comprehending its true meaning or being able to behold the glory of the thought expressed by the great Artist? And because these fail in comprehension shall we then refuse the higher evidence of our better nature and deny the existence of whatever civilized savages fail to understand?

The people, too, were to him a constant study. While some there were who strove to appear what they were not, for the most part there was an absence of that miserable spirit of dissimulation and pretence which in larger or smaller measure appears inseparably connected with the advancement of cultivated and refining influences. With most there was a hearty naturalness which had for him, as it has for all, an attraction which he felt no disposition to resist.

Aided by the natural and womanly tact of Mrs. Ellery, within the first week of his residence in Plainville he had several times met Mary Grafton. Her fresh young face had first attracted him, but as he came to know her better this was temporarily forgotten in his growing wonder at the grasp of mind betrayed in casual

conversation. Where had she learned the thoughts expressed? Although the cottage contained a good many books, for a cottage, still to him the collection exposed as it was in the little "living room," was insignificant and wholly incapable of revealing the mystery. Who had taught her to think? Was she self taught? And where did thought originate? Could one think only the thoughts of others? Or in the evolution of interior consciousness did this comparatively untaught woman originate for herself the clear opinions which she so modestly expressed? Or did thought "come" to people from an exterior source, a supersensory realm, whose very existence was unknown to those favored by its ministrations? But who could answer? To the deepest questioning of his mind no answer had ever been returned. Would answer ever come? Could it be possible that the intense desire of man to know would in some far off sphere be finally and fully satisfied, or, distressing thought, did man but grope in darkness, forever reaching blindly toward an ideal impossible of attainment?

To Maitland, Mary Grafton was an enigma he could not solve. She seemed possessed of a two-fold nature. Seen at her home and in the homely performance of the duties devolving upon her as daughter and sister she was most charmingly natural and helpful. Her very look as she sought her father's pleasure or answered the childish questioning of her little brother, was to Maitland an inspiration and a lesson in that divine sympathy which enfolds the world with the radiance of Heaven. Engaged, however, in serious conversation, the elevation of her thought and the calm superiority of her manner, utterly lacking in self consciousness, evinced the power of an intellect which compelled his respect, although he could not agree with its conclusions. She certainly differed from the young ladies of his acquaintance.

The little household was an open book to all who came and the very poverty of its surroundings compelled a publicity to which Maitland had heretofore been a stranger. The little "living room" with the "lean-to" kitchen and two tiny bed rooms made up the establishment. One room served all the various purposes of parlor, dining room and library; between this and the kitchen the door was generally open and thus was for the first time presented to the visitor an opportunity to study a manner of life to which he now paid close attention. Here were people without what he had been taught to regard as the comforts and refinements of life, who yet were happy in each other. Without scholastic attainments here was a most attractive personage who yet was capable of the most elevated thought.

Plainly he was becoming interested and Mrs. Ellery was correspondingly happy. The visit, which at first was intended only as a stay of a day or two, on the way to California, gradually lengthened, without apparent intention on the part of the young preacher of bringing it to a close.

Mr. Ellery's horse and buggy were often seen standing at the cottage door. Mrs. Ellery somehow had so much to say to Mary concerning the removal, that frequent trips were necessary and as the duty of entertaining Mr. Maitland had in part fallen on her, she contrived to be accompanied by him on divers and sundry occasions, which the neighbors remarked, became more and more frequent as time passed on.

Mr. Maitland had met Mr. Grafton a number of times, but between the two no intimate acquaintance seemed possible, in fact a serious constraint had early developed. The business which Grafton intended undertaking was often discussed in the hearing of the young man and comments varying with the feelings and sentiments of the speaker were passed, so that he had soon come to believe that as Grafton's

mission was that of an agitator intending to affect political action, that it was, no matter how honest the intention, rather shadowy in its nature. He did not think it exactly disreputable, but his education and previous training inclined him to think it exceedingly questionable in character.

In his view the fortunes of all were in their own hands and for people to rebel against what he regarded as the decrees of fate, or the orderings of Providence, was simply to find fault with themselves in endeavoring to foist the blame of results upon laws or customs, when whatever of ill had resulted was entirely owing to personal short coming. In consonance with this, the only way to remedy whatever of ill there was in life was for each to bring himself into right relations with his surroundings. And this was to be effected mainly by each securing for himself a personal righteousness of character which would insure to all the high development of which each was capable and whatever measure of worldly success was intended for the individual. The American form of government was as nearly perfect as it was possible for human effort to construct and fault finding with that was almost sacrilegious in character. Thus armed, he considered that Grafton in undertaking radical change was rushing in where angels might well feel the need of caution in their movements.

The two men, thus differently constituted, had in conversation, drifted upon topics in which Grafton was deeply interested, and without developing an argument, each felt satisfied that he had found out how the other stood, and like mental combatants generally, each had underrated the position of the other.

Having completed his arrangements Grafton made preparations to move his children with their individual belongings to their new home. Mary wished to defer the matter until after Mr. Maitland had taken his leave, but her father would not

listen to the thought of her remaining in the cottage after his departure. She knew that when once her father had made up his mind, that it would be useless to argue the matter and accordingly with heavy heart and many silent tears Mary locked the door of the little home, where her mother had breathed her last. Somehow it seemed to her that here she was nearer her mother than elsewhere, and reason as she might about the matter, she could not but feel that in leaving the cottage she was moving herself farther away from the silent influences still proceeding from the dearest heart that had ever fluttered for her in human breast. In the hurry and bustle attending the change in residence, Grafton had largely concealed whatever of sorrow he may have felt. Just before he was to start upon his journey, however, he called at Mr. Ellery's house for the purpose of saying farewell to his children. Mrs. Ellery was present but very considerably withdrew. The time was short and not much could be said; indeed he had purposely deferred the parting until but a short time before the starting of the train upon which he was to go. Taking Charlie upon his knee he took a seat near Mary.

"Charlie," said he, "I have only one thing to tell you in parting; it is this: Be a good boy and mind what your sister tells you."

"Now, Mary," said he, "it isn't worth while for me to leave commands for you, but this I hope you will remember: Live your own life. Be true to your highest conception of right, remembering that we have each become a law unto ourselves. What to you seems just and true is binding upon your soul, whether upon others or not. I shall see you both frequently," said he, and kissing each fervently he was gone.

There had not been time for many tears or an exhibition of deep feeling and although both father and daughter were deeply affected by the separation, still it

had occurred quietly and without excitement. Nor was it until her father had gone and the full meaning of the breaking up of the family came over her that Mary realized that one of the turning points of life had now been passed, whether for good or ill was yet to be determined.

Retiring to her room she gave herself up for the time to the most somber reflections. How full of sorrow the last few years had been. The loss of their home and her mother's untimely death again weighed heavily upon her mind. How happy the home had been, now destroyed forever. For the moment bitter thoughts filled her heart. The loss of the home and the consequent shock, coming at a time of delicate health, had killed her mother. But for the added misery of poverty and waning fortune she would have rallied and recovered. And what were the influences which had brought all this about? Having made a study of these she was fully convinced that the control of the markets and finances of the country had so depressed the business of the farmer as to cause the condition of affairs which had resulted in their financial ruin. And this, thought she, is the work of men who claim the right thus to destroy homes and happiness, and slowly murder by means of the market. Freedom of contract there was none. That all had an equal chance in life was a delusion. If mere weight of money was thus to rule, the combination which secured the larger sum, controlled all. Far back in the history of the race, brawn and the power of muscle were the arbiters of fate. All were equal there; each could use the strength he had, but the giant of the iron hand took to himself whatever pleased his fancy, while petty cultivators of the ground could hide when he walked abroad.

Thus was it now, except that instead of muscle, money ruled, and cruelty and injustice were the result of the reign of either. When a combination had been formed and an agreement entered into by

the controllers of the market only to pay so much, the farmer was told:

"We do not compel you to sell to us at a stated price," well knowing that a price had been fixed beyond which he could not go.

"We do not compel you to ship your grain and stock upon our railroads," says the magnates, well knowing that the necessities of the producer force him to use the railway, although half the value of his property be taken for its carriage.

"If you do not like our charges, build you a railroad to carry your stuff, or transport your carcass to the city," says the sharpers who have possessed themselves of the lines of communication.

"You are not compelled to borrow our money," say the Ministers of Mammon, well knowing that in modern society there is but one thing which all must have in larger or smaller quantities and having secured a monopoly of its management they await the homage of all.

Thus ran her thoughts and rebellion rose within her breast. With flashing eyes and quick coming breath she resolved with her mother's fate before her, to do whatever seemed possible to oppose giant and overpowering wrong. If rebellion against tyranny was obedience to God, she would be a rebel, whatever might betide.

CHAPTER XX.—OPINIONS.

IT will not be supposed that affairs at Mr. Ellery's were unnoticed by the people of Plainville. All the actual happenings were duly reported, while many events were discussed which it was thought might possibly occur. And as all were at liberty to exercise their imaginations regarding the future, the faculty was given full play by much the larger share of the villagers.

One morning Mr. Ellery found that his horse had cast a shoe which must surely be replaced. Leading the animal over to Mr. Weldon's shop, the loss of the shoe was

stated and the blacksmith at once set to work to remedy the difficulty. But although Mr. Ellery was employed in holding the horse and Weldon in fitting the shoe, the minds of both were comparatively unemployed. It is said that a certain and unmentionable personage finds work for idle hands and minds to do, and this wise old saw probably includes in its operation the man of prayers and sermons as well as the common and undevout. However this may be, the blacksmith could not refrain from at once addressing himself to the most interesting topic of conversation in all Plainville.

"Pretty nice kind of a man that's visitin' you, ain't he? I believe he's a preacher, too."

"Yes, Maitland is a fine young man of generous impulses, who, so far at least, has not been spoiled by getting fastened in a groove of any kind. Most men run in a groove or rut of their own, whether of business or habit of mind, and judge everything by its relation to their particular line of thought. This they imagine to be very straight—to others it appears crooked enough—while but few are of sufficient breadth of mind to see that there is good in all and that none are perfect."

"Well, he may be an awful nice man, but he ain't jest the kind of a man I would pick out for Mary Grafton," said the blacksmith, breaking at once into the topic which interested him most.

"Well, I am not aware that anybody is 'picking him out,'" said the preacher rather coolly.

"Yes, I know, but then you see folks doesn't have to be knocked down with a hint before they take it. Now Mary was always a favorite with our Plainville people and they don't quite fancy havin' this Boston feller come out here and carry off the sweetest flower in the whole garden. It kinder sets them agin him, you know."

"Maitland isn't from Boston, and I don't know that he has any idea of carrying off

our flower. So that Plainville people are altogether too fast."

The blacksmith apparently paid no attention to the cold water which Mr. Ellery seemed disposed to throw upon the discussion, and continued: "Now Mary always put me in mind of one of them high strung Kentucky mares that we occasionally see; pretty as a picture, high head, arched neck, curved and pointed ears, big, clear-looking eyes, knows everything, can do anything and willing to do it, too, if you only treat 'em right, but for all they are so bidable and easy managed and sweet tempered, jest you go to beatin' and abusin' one of that kind and see if something don't get broke right away quick."

"That's rather a rough simile," said the preacher, "but I don't know but what it is somewhere near the truth."

"Course it is near the truth; it's right at it. Now Mary might go through life without anybody ever knowin' the spirit there is in that girl, if she wasn't misused. But if she really was, she'd know it and I'm inclined to think that you couldn't strike that steel without some sparks a-flyin'."

"The great poet has said that, 'Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned,'" said Mr. Ellery, "though I rather think that passage would be considered a good example of hyperbole; an exaggeration of the truth."

"Kind of a high example you think? Well I'd know if I was that mean that I really did deserve to be scorned by Mary Grafton, I'd rather see the devil than have her tell me what she thought of me."

The shoe was soon reset and Mr. Ellery was rather glad to seize the opportunity to break off a conversation which it occurred to him was becoming rather too personal in its nature.

The unexpected visit of Mr. Maitland to Kansas, the interest shown by him in Mary Grafton and the circumstances which had conspired, by prior arrangement, to throw them together at Mr. Ellery's formed a

topic which was strangely interesting to all. Busteed had early interviewed Mr. Ellery regarding the reported wealth of the stranger and had queried whether it would be possible to induce him to invest in Plainville property, or whether he could influence the sending out of "cheap money" to his bank, which could be re-loaned by him at heavier rates.

Mr. Ellery explained that Maitland was a student of men and things, that he was dependent for a support upon his father who was a manufacturer of cotton in a Massachusetts town and not a loaner of money. Busteed however, could not understand why he should be traveling over the country, unless he was looking for a place to exercise his calling as a preacher, or had an eye open to "the main chance." That a man should travel merely with the idea of studying nature and human nature was something beyond his comprehension.

People generally in the village with whom Maitland had come in contact regarded him as a very companionable sort of a man and a very good kind of a man indeed—for a preacher. Preachers, however, for the most part, were regarded as lacking in those very indefinable qualities which they summed up under the head of "manhood." Of course they were well enough, in their way, but that as a class they were lacking in a very important element of character, was quite generally conceded by implication and general understanding. This general agreement was never obtrusively stated in words, still the fact was apparent in the daily life of the community. It was felt that in the services of the church and at "sociables," festivals and in the direction of Sunday schools and the like that the preacher could not be spared; that was his place; but in the real life and business of the world which employed six-sevenths of their time and ninety-nine hundredths of their thoughts he had no place whatever. In fact it was felt that his advice upon important matters, outside of his

special department, was in the nature of an impertinence not to be endured. They were willing to listen to doctrines, embellished with scriptural quotations, but they must not be applied to the lives of people now on earth, unless they lived at a remote distance from the speaker and his hearers. It was felt rather than stated that the preachers didn't dare tell their congregation just what they thought of them and their conduct in the daily business of life. The congregation on its part feeling the force of this and the lack of moral courage which prompted it, could not fail to see that that supreme quality in man, respected in all and by all, was very conspicuous by reason of its absence in the characters of a very large number of those who were called upon to declare the whole counsel of God.

That Maitland should remain in Plainville seemed to the inhabitants of that village the most natural thing in the world. Where would he find a nicer little village than theirs, or where could he find a pleasanter place than the house of Mr. Ellery for a visit, with its kind and motherly hostess and most attractive occupant. That his visit would have been sooner concluded had he not met Mary, was beginning to dawn upon Maitland's own comprehension, still he was not aware that so deep an impression had been made upon himself as to the Ellerys appeared manifest. He was interested in Miss Grafton, he was willing to acknowledge that to himself, and he thought that if she could only abandon what he was disposed to regard as some very peculiar views, that she would then be quite well informed and mentally well furnished. As it was, the holding of these views, so strenuously as she did, made quite an unfavorable impression upon him. Mary, upon her part, held much the same view of the character of the young preacher. If he could only change his notions regarding economic matters and adopt what she regarded as correct views,

he would then be in position to be of great service in the world. Each had endeavored to convince the other of error and in their frequent discussions the apparent advantage had nearly always been with Mary because she spoke of what she was familiar with, while Maitland having never given special attention to matters of that sort was but poorly prepared for an argument.

One day, after he had stated at some length his peculiar opinions, Mary said:

"You know, Mr. Maitland, that the law of Heaven as proclaimed to Adam and Eve, when they were shut out from Paradise was the law of labor—'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.' That, I take it applies to all mankind. All must labor or render acceptable service and the laws of nature enforce the command. Some, however, escape, but no one escapes, or ever has escaped, without throwing the burden of the labor thus evaded upon the shoulders of others. Now in your own individual case your father has saved you the necessity of labor, so far at least, but upon whom has the burden of your life been placed if not upon the operatives whom he employs? The profits of their labor, which he has been enabled to absorb, form the support upon which you depend. You do not labor because an extra share has been imposed upon them."

"What you say," said he, "no doubt is true in a certain sense, but you must remember that society with all its vast gains and improvements exists upon a basis which the literal carrying out of your opinions would destroy. All progress, all improvement in the future depend upon the further spread of a civilization which you would make impossible. If all labored, no time would be left for thought and mental advance. Where all are equally poor, in time all become equally ignorant; leisure to think and plan is the very first step in the march to progress. Your thought, allow me to say, is crude, in that it subordinates the higher to the lower.

Society has a right to exist, if it stands for the final advancement of mankind, as I believe it does, and this being the case whatever is absolutely essential to this advance must be defended against the assaults of those who would only destroy without supplying anything but mere savagery and brutism to take its place."

"You have undertaken Mr. Maitland, as a preacher, to take up your cross and follow Christ. Following Christ I take to mean a service of the truth, to follow wherever it leads. The disciples had promised to follow Christ and so they did up to the time of his arrest. Peter especially had vehemently announced that he would follow though all should forsake him, but when he saw the Saviour apprehended and in the custody of the soldiers, he too began to think of the rights of society, and when one of the maids came into the outer court and saw him there, she said 'And thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee,' but he denied; social forms, 'law and order' must be preserved even though Christ died. Peter was willing to follow until he came in contact with the law and the soldiers. You are willing to follow until you come up against the labor question, then you deny that simple truth is to be followed and take refuge in generalities and the rights of society which when inquired into seem to be the right of the strong to impose themselves and their improvement upon those weaker brethren who appear unable to help themselves. The essence of all this is simple selfishness the very opposite of the spirit of true Christianity and impossible of defence. Civilization will take care of itself, it will not perish; let us do right! Surely the self-styled upper classes have no right to exist by defrauding the poor and the weak."

"In the decision of any matter involving a question of right and wrong," said Maitland, "we are obliged to take into account the character of the people who make

answer. In a question of morals, moral men would make one answer, immoral men another. This is a question of right and wrong and in seeking an answer we can do no better than to follow the lead of the church. What it condemns we may consider as against the better judgment of mankind; what it allows we are somewhat arrogant in opposing."

"The church has so often been at fault," said Mary, "it seems scarcely necessary to call attention to its extreme fallibility, but I have at hand so marked an instance of this that please allow me to read. As the church has often been opposed to the principles of human brotherhood taught by Jesus, it is not at all strange to find it now upon the side of the oppressor."

Taking a book from the table she read as follows;

"It is less than two centuries since seven men of the highest standing, a majority of whom were reverend gentlemen, clergymen, as good and pious men as ever lived, as exemplary in every relation of life as it was possible for men to be, sat in a so-called court of justice, each morning session whereof was opened with fervent prayer to the divine source of all knowledge, grace and power, to direct the actions of his servants as the judges of that court; and in that court were arraigned day after day poor, miserable broken down superstitious women and children upon the accusation that they had commerce with the devil and used his power as a means of spite upon their neighbors, and as one of the means of inflicting torture because thereof the devil had empowered these poor creatures to shoot common house pins from a distance into the flesh of their neighbors' child'en, by which they were greatly afflicted. Being put to the bar to be tried, they were not allowed counsel. The deluded creatures sometimes pleaded guilty, and sometimes not guilty, but in either event they were found guilty and executed, and the pins which were produced

in evidence, can now be seen among the records of that court, in the court house of the county of Essex, Massachusetts!

"And beyond all this that court enforced, worse than the tortures of the inquisition, dreadful wrongs upon a prisoner in order to accomplish his conviction. Giles Cory was an old man, eighty years of age. He had a daughter some forty years of age, simple-minded, not able to earn her own living, and a small farm, a piece of land and a house thereon, which he hoped to leave to his daughter at his then impending death. Giles was accused of being a wizard. His life had been blameless in everything except his supposed commerce with the devil. Upon *ex parte* testimony he was indicted for this too great intimacy with the evil one and sent to the bar to be tried for his life.

"Giles knew that if he pleaded not guilty he was sure to be convicted, and if he pleaded guilty he would be sentenced to death, and in either case the farm would be forfeited to the king. But if he did not plead at all—such was the law—then he could not be tried at all, and his property could not be forfeited to the king and taken from his daughter. So Giles stood mute and put the court at defiance.

"And then that court of pious clergymen resorted to a method to make him plead which had not been in practice in England for 200 years and never here, and poor Giles was taken and laid on the ground by the side of the court-house on his back, with the flashing sun burning his eyes and a single cup of water from the ditch of the jail with a crust of bread was given him once in twenty-four hours, and weights were placed upon his body until at last the life was crushed out of him, but not the father's love for his child. He died, but not until his parched tongue protruded from the old man's fevered mouth. It was thrust back by the chief justice with his cane. The cherished daughter inherited."

HOPING for change, one may travel far only to find that he himself has not been left behind. That perception which makes for us, facts, opinions and circumstances, has not been educated or reformed by mere removal.

As with all, Maitland had been the creation of heredity and environment. Two centuries of puritanic ancestry was behind him, and when first he lay, faintly breathing in his mother's arms, he represented the possibility only, of what that had been. It is not only in Genesis and among inferior animals that young are brought forth, "after their kind," it is a fact of universal and absolute application. But although birth is the chiefest factor in the creation of man it is but one of three.

The child becomes an independent soul, is like the tender plant which trustingly spreads its little arms to every sweet influence; the recipient of every look and nod of the sun and the glad participant in every joyous thought of the Summer days.

As readily is it injured too, by the rude storms of Winter or the ruder hand of man. It has no will of its own. The plant became a plant and the child is of the genus *homo* through no thought of either. And as the child is perforce a child, so its region and race are imposed upon it. The breezes that shall blow are not chosen by it, but for it. Its companions, its surroundings, the influences which taken together form, in youth, its bent, trend and tenor of mind are exterior to itself and in no wise the result of its choice. As yet it has no choice.

By and by choice and taste begin to form themselves and like the infant in a new found world reach toward that which to them is attractive. Then for the first time awakes from within, the third force in the creation of man. The knowledge of good and evil is come to him. But it finds him so bent and cramped by facts of birth and warped by accidents of surrounding

that the wonder is that the interior man should ever master the labyrinth of whims and passions, taints and prejudices which birth and environment have created for his occupancy. Escape is impossible. With them he must remain. And as the years go by, the interior man develops and enlarges or shrinks and fades away. He conquers or is conquered.

With Maitland the fight was on. He began, in some faint measure to see himself as he existed, and with this view he was dissatisfied. The pedant and the fop are pleased with their personalities. The wise man beholds himself as a bundle of crudities and prejudices from which he fain would emerge.

Added to the mental struggle, which beginning with him in doubt of certain tenets of a religious faith, was now leading him to review from the beginning the whole groundwork of the duty of man, was the newer complication of an awakening love. Neither birth or breeding nor the lack of them, can hide the superior soul. It looks calmly forth from the eyes of man or woman, in whatever station found and without demanding receives the homage of kindred spirits. Never before had he been so torn by conflicting emotions. Rights, duties, hopes and fears took on new shapes and new thoughts arose. He found in Mary Grafton a something which he could not define, an attraction which he could not understand, and as he queried with himself regarding it, he awoke to the fact that disguise it as he might, the influence which she exerted caused him ever to strive for the higher expression of himself for which his own better moments longed. There seemed in her presence a stimulation to which heretofore he had been a stranger. That this was true he could not deny and yet how it came about he could not comprehend. That a country girl, with but two years experience of life away from her modest home, and those years passed in a subordinate capacity;

self-taught, the pupil only of a father whose own education was limited, should question the existence, off hand, of the very things he had begun only after years of scrutiny to doubt, amazed him. And yet every manifestation of her thought was reverent and tended toward final good, to which she looked forward with calm and perfect confidence. He could not fail to love her for this. Did he love her for herself? Deeply questioned, his heart returned but one reply. But, as he thought difficulties arose and ranged themselves in threatening ranks. Their opinions seemed ever to jar; the end desired was agreed upon but the means to be used in attainment divided them. Several times he had been upon the point of declaring himself in sentimental terms but as if warned by an unknown power she had kept him at bay. Did she in this manner conceal a tender regard? Why was it that with him she showed none of that tenderness and depth of feeling so abundantly manifested toward others? Might it be possible that she divined the shallowness and lack of mental furnishing of which he sometimes accused himself? Could he win her love?

Strange as he thought it, he was obliged to confess to himself that he feared to make the attempt. He had never detected in her manner anything which would encourage him to make an avowal, and although he told himself again and again that a woman of spirit would quite naturally demand that she be won in bold and chivalrous fashion and would shun the appearance of falling unresistingly into the arms of any man, still he put off from day to day what he gradually came to think must be done. And as this feeling strengthened he came more and more to see that her life was the proper complement of his own. With her he should improve. There was that dissimilarity of character between them which united would form a perfect whole. Each could assist the other, and if he could make for

himself that slumbering tenderness which he knew existed in her, Ah, that would be happiness indeed. Still strive as he would, and did, to find opportunity for the expression of the tender passion, she was ever apparently on guard and with clear, wide open eyes and collected manner made it impossible for him to speak except in the plainest terms and without assistance from her.

What was to be done? He was ashamed of himself, of the length of his visit, of his lack of courage and fairly ashamed too, of the shame he felt, and began to wonder whether his friends, the Ellerys, might not be ashamed of him also.

Several times he had planned to speak to Mary upon the subject nearest his heart but each time something had occurred to prevent. At last nerved by desperation he gave out that on the morrow he would take his departure for California. As yet he had never been able to declare himself, but realizing that indecision itself had already reached its climax, he resolved to tempt his fate as became, what he had come to think himself, a very sheepish sort of man.

That evening, finding himself alone in the parlor with Mary, the latter made some excuse to depart and had already nearly reached the door when he found tongue to say:

"Wait a moment, Mary, I really have something to say to you."

Mary had by this time reached the door and stood expectantly waiting, with one hand upon the door knob.

"You must have seen that my regard for you is something more than the ordinary respect which a gentleman may have for a lady," said he, coming towards her.

Releasing her hold upon the door, Mary immediately seated herself upon a chair, and waving her hand towards another, Maitland was forced to do the same.

"In short," said he, "I wish to make an avowal. I have long loved you—at least it

seems a long time—and although you have never given me an encouraging look, I can but hope that you will now look encouragingly upon me. Will you marry me?"

For a moment her eyes sought the floor and Maitland continued:

"You don't know how sincere I am in this matter—you can't know that—and yet my hopes are bound up in your answer. I have never met anyone whom I could so completely love and reverence as I do you. And—"

"Mr. Maitland," said Mary, "you certainly have honored me by your proposal and I thank you for the preference shown, but your own good sense, will upon second thought, show you plainly that in this you have made a mistake. You have been in exile, almost, for some time past and being thrown much in my company of late, you have been moved to make an avowal of love. I must say firmly and plainly that what you ask cannot be. I have certain duties to my father and little brother which I cannot relinquish and even though—"

Maitland would have interrupted her, but she continued:

"Please hear me through because this is a subject which must not be reopened; even though these objections could be removed, although I do not think it possible still there are other and even more insurmountable ones which would prevent. Consider the difference in our lives, how unlike they are and have been and must be in the future."

"Miss Grafton," said he, "perhaps I have been too rash in speaking so soon as I have, although I have charged myself with cowardice in not speaking before, still you will not utterly refuse me. I am an honorable man, no person can say aught against my character and I love you. If I am not positively disagreeable to you, don't cast me off; give me leave to hope. I am going to California. I may not remain there long. Only say that your refusal is not absolute and final."

"I prefer," said she, speaking very slowly and with evident feeling, 'not to discuss this matter further. What I have said is my final answer. We have been very good friends and I hope our friendship will not be interrupted."

Just at this juncture, Mrs. Ellery, not suspecting that she was interrupting, came into the room and made an inquiry regarding Mr. Maitland's departure, which being answered, she, probably suspecting from the appearance of the "young folks" that matters of moment were under discussion, immediately retired.

"My father writes me," said Mary, "that he is having most encouraging success wherever he goes. All seem to approve the plan which he—and I—have so much at heart, and I do hope Mr. Maitland, that you will see when you have more fully examined into it that he is as fully doing what you preachers are wont to call 'the Lord's work,' and that he is as thoroughly devoted to the welfare of his fellowmen as any knight or martyr of old could be or ever was. My father is a grand man, a true man, his moral courage is sublime and although poor and almost unknown, I would rather share his lot and fate whatever it may be, than to wear a coronet to which I was not entitled or live upon the wealth for which others had toiled and spent days and nights of grievous sorrow."

Mary's eyes filled with tears but her voice did not falter as she continued: "Myself and little brother are all that is left to my father; we form the tie which binds him to life. He is not demonstrative, but a truer heart never beat. For us he would sacrifice, has sacrificed, ease and comfort and I will never forsake him or follow any course which might cause him to feel that in his old age he was neglected or forsaken. He has plans that are far-reaching and from their success we hope for much of good. These plans and the hopes which they have inspired, have taken complete possession of him and in the work which

he has undertaken he is wholly enlisted, with an earnest desire to benefit his fellows. What higher motive, Mr. Maitland, can actuate the human soul?"

CHAPTER XXII.—PROGRESS OF THE CAMPAIGN.

EVEN in Plainville, sleepy village that it was, the days flew wearily by; event followed hard upon event and even the leaden footed hours could not stay the march of time.

Time flies, we say, but is it not true that time remains?

We pass away, but Nature is ever young, ever sweet and fair she woe us with the grace and charm of unchanging youth. Time is. It does not flee, but ever remains the great eternal and invisible fact whose beginning and ending are alike incomprehensible to mortal man. Eternity is not some far away thought of man, whose beginning comes with the close of our brief span of life. It is the now we know and like Deity itself enfolds every changing scene and passing hour and is yet itself unmoved and immovable. Change is written upon all created things but time and space are uncreated and eternal attributes of that vast Power in whom are all things and by whom we alone exist.

We seem to be in the middle of the ages with uncounted years stretching their slowly dissolving lengths behind us, while before, the cavernous abyss of an unknown future is veiled from sight. Man trembles from the very grandeur of his position.

Whence came he? Is he alone, a fresh and original creation? Around him the forms of matter exist in changing shapes, the inheritors of creations which preceded them. The comet with its gaseous train shows us the process of world building; itself the aggregation of pre-existent matter. At last, solidified and re-formed it takes its place in the retinue of worlds and when vast cycles are fully completed and firm set earth appears, it becomes the home of life and days and nights of joy for it begin.

Still is it all, but the re-formation of what knew no creation. To time and space must be added the eternity of matter.

But these are inferior forces. Above them all is the eternal thought. As the thought of man controls in a mysterious way the movement of his arm, so the thought of the enfolding Spirit moves upon time, space and matter and they obey, and the awakened eyes of man behold as a truth, needing no demonstration, the immutability and eternity of that primal essence which breathing upon the face of the great deep made possible that condition which we call life. Spirit and Matter, Time and Space, these are the sole eternals and immutables which, never beginning, shall never end.

And as man, as we know him, is the combination of Spirit and Matter, may he not have existed in previous shapes and forms, to us now unknown? And when at last, rising in the scale of being, he shall be able to know even as he is known, may he not be able to trace his course adown the endless vistas of time to that single, yet multitudinous Force, the great and only One?

Maitland had departed rather sorrowfully and with evident regret. Somehow the man had undergone a change and a troubled look had settled upon his face as he bade farewell to the friends he had made. Mary gave him no opportunity for the private interview which he had inwardly hoped to secure. More grave and reserved than usual she still quite cordially took his hand in parting while he found opportunity to say:

"May I write?"

"Certainly," said she, "I shall be pleased to hear from you, wherever you go."

"But will you answer?"

"Yes, I surely could not refuse."

That was all; the train moved off and Mr. and Mrs. Ellery and Mary, who were at the depot to see him off, slowly retraced

their steps toward their home. The house looked lonesome and forsaken as they approached. Entering, they removed their wraps and sat down. They looked at one another for a moment in silence.

"Really seems almost like a funeral," said Mr. Ellery, glancing, as he spoke, at Mary.

"Mr. Maitland was such a cheery, genial fellow that I almost fell in love with him myself," said Mrs. Ellery, as she too looked at Mary.

Mary made no reply but hastily gathering up her shawl and bonnet went at once to her room. When she had gone Mr. Ellery said: "Did George offer himself, do you think?"

"I think he did," said Mrs. Ellery quite cautiously, "but I am not sure. Evidently there was something which occurred to change the current of feeling between them. They both took great pleasure in the conversations which they were constantly holding whenever opportunity offered, almost to the last. I think, however, that I interrupted conversation of a peculiar kind yesterday. Afterward both were quite shy and reserved."

"Well," said Mr. Ellery, "it is something with which we have no right to interfere."

"Oh, no," said she, "not for the world. They must be free to act for themselves. I did think though that they were made for each other."

Gradually affairs took on their wonted and rather monotonous appearance in Plainville. Mary went daily to her classes accompanied by Charlie, who was one of her pupils, and the village gradually came to forget the fine looking preacher who had been for a time the center of attraction and the subject of conversation.

Mr. Grafton was heard of from week to week as he pursued his work, and tidings came that he and the other "lecturers" who had been dispatched on the same errand were meeting with great success in

the work of inducing united action on the part of the farmers' organizations. The effort thus made had for its end the adoption of certain "demands" by the farmers, to which they were to commit themselves. Political animosities with them, took on so great a virulence that it was impossible to advocate the claims of one party without securing the hatred and lasting dislike of all opposing factions and the attempt was made to inculcate a course of action within the limits of all the existing political parties and no favoritism was to be shown to either or any. Certain so-called demands were formulated and printed and kept constantly before the farmers and advocated at their meetings and it was agreed that no general movement embracing the carrying out of the demands should be entered upon until a practical unanimity had been reached. Grafton and the other lecturers had been sent during the Fall to every county seat in the State and in each county the numbers of those who favored and those who opposed were carefully kept upon record and sent to the State headquarters.

The plan included the presentation of a printed copy of the "demands" to every candidate of all the different political parties, which he was to be asked to sign, by a committee sent from the farmers and it was agreed that no member would vote for a candidate for any office whatever, unless he would pledge himself in writing to use his utmost exertions at all times and places, and in every manner, to secure the passage of the laws demanded.

As there had been no attempt to interfere with the political predilections or prejudices of any, and as the demands were purposely limited in number and did not interfere in any wise with the party creeds there had been little difficulty in securing almost unanimous consent on the part of the farmers.

Knowledge of the stand taken being conveyed through the proper channels to the

Board of Control of the State, that body very cautiously issued its "recommendation," which, reciting the fact that a substantial agreement having been reached regarding a course of action it was recommended that pledges be taken in writing from all candidates for office and that so far as practicable the election of men of character and moral standing be secured in each county, pledged to carry out the wishes of the electors.

As the canvass proceeded it was found that in counties where the farmers were in the majority that there was no trouble in securing the signatures of candidates representing all the political parties to the pledges as presented and in other localities, although a furious newspaper tirade was kept up, upon the part of certain sheets suspected of unfriendliness to the farmer's interests, no effort was made to interfere in any manner with the attempt upon the part of the voters to secure representatives who would endeavor honestly to assist in the work of lifting from the farmer the burdens which were taking from him the means of living and gradually reducing him to indigence and poverty. It began to dawn upon the minds of thinking citizens that in a state almost solely dependent upon agriculture and stock raising that if the farmers were in such straits as they themselves declared existed, it would be the part of prudence and wisdom to heed their warnings and take such steps as might result in ameliorating their condition, and with this end in view certain public-spirited citizens in several counties made investigation of the amount of indebtedness, both public and private, which rested upon the inhabitants of the different townships of their counties, with the annual interest charges upon the same. A careful estimate was also made of the total crops raised in the same territory and the price which could be obtained for the same; from this was deducted the annual cost of living and keep

of necessary stock with cost of seed, etc., etc., and although these exhibits were not made public it had the effect of raising up for the farmer's cause powerful advocates, who proclaimed with both tongue and pen the absolute necessity of radical measures for the relief of the farmers from the results of a combination of circumstances, not the result of their own wrong doing.

As a consequence of this condition of affairs the election which followed in November, 189— resulted in a tremendous majority for the plan of campaign as promulgated by the farmers in their demands. Here and there attempts were made to "count ut" candidates who had been prominent in espousing what by this time was seen to be the cause of the whole people, but these attempts were quickly frustrated, for it began to be seen that unless the farmers were at least moderately prosperous that it would be impossible for either merchants, lawyers or doctors, or even bankers to live among them, since they all depended upon them either directly or indirectly and it was remembered that in the past, the time in which the farmers were prosperous had always been the time of prosperity to all, including the professional classes.

As the feeling began to be openly expressed by men of all classes that in a State the interest of one should be the interest of all, and that no policy which bore hardly upon one class, and that the greatest in point of numbers and importance, could long be pursued without involving the final ruin of all, a great change in public sentiment and feeling began to be manifested and here and there men of brilliant and commanding abilities allied themselves with the farmers and in public addresses, which were quickly spread broadcast over the State, announced themselves as converted to the necessity of radical measures of reform.

That men are like sheep, in playing the game of "follow your leader" was once

more exemplified in a surprising manner and all at once there appeared the greatest unanimity of feeling upon the questions which agitated the public mind. In fact it began to be difficult to find a man who would acknowledge that he had been at heart opposed to the farmer's interests. The election occurring under auspices of this character made certain the return of a large majority favorable to the cause of radical reform and this for a time was the universally expressed sentiment of the State. If any had other feelings they wisely kept them to themselves.

But after the *furor* of the election had subsided and men began to coolly survey the field and to think of the measures to be employed, a very natural difference of opinion regarding the proposed plan began to be manifested. And these differences, slight at first, and easily reconcilable, were magnified by the press, so that when the time of meeting of the State Legislature had arrived, a heated controversy in the newspapers being kept up in the meantime, two plainly discernible factions had ranged themselves in opposing ranks.

On the part of one it was said that while it was plain that something radical was needed and the advisability of some sort of a stay law was conceded, still the abolition of the collection of debts by law was furiously opposed, and an attempt was made to show that this would involve the utter prostration of business and take from the poor and industrious man the power of obtaining credit, with which he might be able to accumulate a competency. It was noticed that the advocates of this view, although they spoke only of the poor man and the evils which would fall upon his head by the action of the proposed legislation, consisted almost entirely of lawyers and men who were interested, either directly or indirectly, in loaning money, still they spoke earnestly and eloquently for the poor man and wished, so they said, to see him secure in all his rights and

privileges which the proposed legislation would plainly curtail.

The other side stoutly maintained that debt was the great evil, the cause of untold misery and vastly superior to intoxicating drink as a cause of poverty and crime, and they quoted from statistics at great length which, so they said, showed that in a general way crime was committed in direct proportion to the misery, ignorance and poverty of the people. That the ability to get into debt was an imaginary advantage and an actual and positive disadvantage to every honest man. "Pay as you go," said they, "is the philosopher's stone which turns all to gold." They showed that by actual experience short credits would not be interfered with, as they were made upon the honor of the debtor at that time, and would so continue. They also showed that while under laws then existing it might be possible for a man in comfortable circumstances to adopt for himself the plan of cash payments, the organization of society under the plan of universal debt, made it nearly impossible for the man already in the meshes of circumstances to do this, and, said they, if society generally is involved and depressed by the operation of laws and customs, indirectly all must suffer and in the long run the general public prosperity and happiness will be gradually reduced to a lower and still lower level.

CHAPTER XXIII.—AFTER THE ELECTION.

A THIRD faction also began to develop, composed of those who claimed that the proposed abolition of the collection of debt by law was too sweeping in its effects. Their claim was to the effect that a provision should be made for the benefit of those who sold real estate to people who desired to secure a home. Every family, said they, ought to possess a home of its own, and in order that the process of home acquirement might be facilitated and people be enabled to buy, who had not the means to pay down the full amount of pur-

chase money, it would be necessary for them to secure in some way the owners of land, otherwise they would refuse to sell. No man, they said, who owned land would part with it unless he was paid in full, or was given good security for the deferred payments, and as the poor man who bought could only give good security upon the land, it would be of advantage to all classes, including both buyers and sellers, that some provision of law be made securing the collection of this class of debts. This faction claimed to favor the proposed legislation in the main, but it was noticed that those who advocated this view did not represent the poor home-seekers, although they claimed to speak for them.

In this way the fruits of the great victory, which it was thought had been secured by the election in November, began to have the appearance of being frittered away as people ranged themselves upon one side or the other of the various shades of opinion which the situation gave rise to. As usual that class of people who are by nature compromisers, took a hand in the general discussion going on all over the State. The people who are ever ready to decide questions by giving half to either side and who when called upon to decide between white and black, invariably say that gray is a superior color to either, and that the adherents of both white and black should not hesitate to accept gray as a compromise, since it is made by a blending of both colors, put forth their plan, which was mainly that the buyers of land could make partial payments upon land, the title to remain in the seller until fully paid for, the buyer to accept a bond for a deed as security for the money paid; money so paid to be and remain a first lien upon the land bought.

During the two months which elapsed between the election and the meeting of the legislature, if one had judged the temper of the public mind by reading the partisan and political newspapers published

in the State, he would certainly have concluded that discord and confusion reigned. Two things, however, operated to prevent the minds of the farmers from being diverted to any great extent from the originally expressed purposes of the campaign. The greatest, of course, was the thorough discussion of the questions at stake among the farmers, which had preceded the election, their organizations holding solidly to their original demands and very generally refusing all overtures of compromise upon the very moderate measures upon which they had at first agreed. It began once more to be seen, as has been the case throughout the history of the world, that although tillers of the soil are usually very slow to accept changes in their manner of thought, still when they have once thoroughly made up their minds they are not easily diverted from the execution of their plans.

The other reason was that the opposition which had apparently been lost sight of at the time of the election, could not quite conceal the fact that they were now endeavoring to prevent the success of the people's cause by the policy of dividing what they had failed to conquer when united. The character and known interests of the advocates who were industriously seeking to create divisions appeared too plainly upon the surface for effectual concealment.

Although feeling ran high and a subdued excitement had taken possession of the whole body of citizens, the great and distinguishing excellence of the American people, accustomed as they had been to decide all questions in a public capacity, became manifest to all. No disturbance of any moment took place and the greatest good nature prevailed in all public assemblies upon the part of all participants.

Although the partisan press still kept up its weekly fusillade, it began to be noticed that the public deliverances of the farmer's organizations at their meetings and in the

papers championing their cause showed no material change in sentiment or expression. Replying to the compromisers, they showed most conclusively that any attempt to change their plans by substituting a plan for the purchase of homes by the creation of debts would inevitably result in delivering the home purchaser into the hands of the dealers in money: that the buyer of land under the proposed plan, in case he failed to pay in full, would be subjected to the pains and penalties of a suit at law, to obtain from the party of whom he had bought, the money he had advanced, and that it was far better for a man to be entirely free from debt, with some money in the bank, than to be the holder of land which somebody else really owned. It was acknowledged by them that in any radical change some hardships would inevitably have to be endured, but that the entire freedom from debt and consequent deliverance of a people from its galling chains, and the domination which it necessarily imposed, was a cause which fully justified any effort which might be made to escape what was clearly seen as the great evil of the time.

Thus matters stood at the time of the inauguration of the new State administration and a general feeling of expectancy, not unmixed with alarm on the part of so-called conservative citizens, held possession of the public mind.

The inauguration of Governor Clover took place, as usual, in the capitol at Topeka and was unattended by anything unusual beyond the deep feeling of anxiety, which appeared to take possession of the masses of people that crowded the Hall of Representatives almost to the point of suffocation.

As the governor elect came forward to take the oath of office he was seen to be a stout, well-built man of open countenance and ruddy complexion, some fifty years of age, who though somewhat agitated by the weighty responsibilities of the hour, was

yet master of himself and of the situation in which he was placed by the suffrages of the electors of Kansas. The ceremony having been quickly concluded, he stepped to the front and producing a roll of manuscript began the reading of his inaugural address as follows;

"Fellow Citizens of Kansas, impressed as I am at this hour with the solemn and weighty responsibilities of my present position, I should not do justice to you, nor to myself if I failed to acknowledge in a fitting and suitable manner my dependence upon the Supreme Arbiter of events. Appealing to Him and to that innate sense of justice which inhabits the breasts of honest men, the people whom I represent in an official capacity have declared their unalterable opposition to anything which may militate against the truest interests of the whole people of the State of Kansas. The interest of no class of citizens, even though that class should represent a majority of its people, should be fostered or advanced, if thereby the just rights of any citizen be by such action imperiled or put in jeopardy. The history of the past has fully proved the power of majorities to work great injustice in their dealings with the few and the fear has been expressed that in the accession to power in this State of the present administration that measures might be adopted which would prove both injurious and unjust to the rights and privileges of some.

"Fellow citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives, under these circumstances it will be right and proper for us to declare in the most solemn manner our determination to be guided in the legislation which may be effected by what the good Chancellor Kent has described as 'those fit and just rules of conduct which the Creator has prescribed to man as a dependent and social being, and which are to be ascertained by the deductions of right reason. Let us also remember that in the words of one of the greatest American

lawyers that 'upon entering into society for the purpose of having their natural rights secured and protected or properly redressed, the few do not give up or surrender any portion of their priceless heritage in any government constituted as it should be.' Let it be our duty, and pleasure as well, to secure to all, so far as we may be able, those inalienable rights to life, liberty and property, upon which depend our modern social life and business existence."

As the governor began the reading of his message the immense assemblage stood in silence and with most intense expectancy written upon their countenances. Gradually the strained and anxious look gave way as his hearers glancing into the faces of those about them read the expressions of approval and satisfaction which began to be manifested there. Continuing, he took up, one after another, the questions which had so agitated the minds of the people of the State, and each in turn was so fairly and moderately stated and treated that when he had concluded the applause was most generous and unstinted.

The assemblage slowly dispersed and the people composing it chatted pleasantly among themselves as they made their way out of the building; the general expression among the Topeka people being that the address was very good indeed for a "granger" and evinced some care in its preparation and altogether was somewhat satisfactory, being plainly intended to reassure those who had feared destruction to the monied interests from the election of a plain farmer upon a platform which had asserted some of the usual platitudes on "the rights of labor."

Among the country people present, as visitors and members of the legislature, the address was regarded as "just the thing." One of the members elect, who had collected a little knot of fellow legislators around him in one of the corridors, declared to his interested listeners that:

"Ben Clover was just as big a man as there was on the platform, for all the chief justice and his gold bowed spectacles. Talk about your education and polish! Mother-wit and natural good sense beats everything else, time a man gets to be forty years old."

"Then," said he, "men fall out and fight because they don't understand each other. One side means one thing by the use of a set of words and the other fellows mean something else and here they are at cross purposes before they know it, when if they only fully understood each other there wasn't so much difference in 'em after all."

"Well, now," said another, "what you say is all true enough, folks don't understand each other, that's a fact, and no doubt that is the cause of a great deal of trouble, but I want you to understand that there is something more than the dictionary between the two sides that's going to lock horns in this legislature before long."

"That's all true enough too," said the first, "but what I mean to say is that the honest men, the men who mean to do right and are disposed to do the fair thing, won't have much trouble in understanding each other once we get to work and talk things over. The trouble will come from fellows that's hired to misrepresent and delay and rake up difficulties and dig pits for the rest of us."

"That's so," broke in another, "and what makes the outlook bad is that these last fellows, who mean to make trouble, are keen, bright men who know the ropes and have a way of controlling the men they run with. Turn a lot of horses together and there'll be one among 'em that the rest will follow anywhere. Don't seem to make much difference what kind of a horse it is; ten to one it's a worthless old plug, but he can lead 'em, and it's just so with men, they'll follow after some scoundrel and sure's they do he'll get 'em into a bad hole."

"I tell you Bill," said the first speaker,

"there's where the good of organizations come in. Now if there is no organization, like the old alliance for instance, a lot of strange men, thrown together for fifty days as the legislature is, would be hauled around by these black sheep leaders, but when honest well-intentioned men have an organization controlled by established principles, that sort of work gets a black eye right where it'll do the most good. The organization acts the part of the fence around the pasture where Bill's horses are running. The old plug leaders is there and the crowd run after 'em but the fence stops 'em from going very far. You see the fence is put up on established principles, in which the rights of men and property are settled and the bounds staked out by a force which the old plugs, men or horses, are bound to respect. Now you turn a lot of horses loose on the prairie and the meanest horse you've got will lead the whole bunch clean off to his old stamping ground. Then you see they ain't no use to you nor to themselves and ten to one some man's crop is a suffering. The mischief is to pay somewheres, you can bet your life. But now you just turn them horses into a pasture with a good religious fence with plenty of barbs on the top wire, and the next morning you know where they are. The horses ain't changed none in disposition, the old plug leader is there but he ain't running the flesh off the bunch now; nor getting them into some man's cornfield. I tell you horses ain't no good unless they're controlled by something they respect, and loose men ain't no better than loose horses. Principles, organization and government is good things for both men and horses, but it's mighty important which side of the fence your man or your horse gets to be."

CHAPTER XXIV.—SOMETHING HAPPENS.

THE session of the Legislature which followed was most exciting and troublous. Action upon the main propositions was deferred from day

to day, first by one and then another motion of delay. The minor points of difference which argument had developed during and since the canvass were carefully kept alive and division fomented by every device known to the artful. So-called "great men," belonging to both the Democratic and Republican parties strayed casually into Topeka and were "invited" to speak upon the issues of the day. Upon one point both were agreed and on that much was said by the eminent men of either party. The sacredness of the right to have and hold property was enlarged upon and argued at great and most convincing length. After the speeches these eminent leaders were introduced, at different times, to the members of the Legislature belonging to their respective parties and with those who gave promise of becoming leaders, much time was spent in explaining the legal aspect of the proposed legislation. Flattered by the attention of men of national reputation, these began to waver in their adherence to the strict letter of the demands; the demands were well enough, something must be done but they were not in favor, now that they properly understood the matter, of anything which might savor of revolution.

Matters were still further complicated by the promises made in the matter of the election of a senator. Upon this question party lines were strictly drawn and a heated and acrimonious discussion had so embittered the factions that no agreement appeared possible among them upon any question whatever.

Thus the session wore slowly away and the fifty days, for which the members received pay, at last expired and the "demands" were still unheeded. Although at the outset a majority had favored them, this majority had yielded to the powerful, and as it appeared, convincing arguments of the visiting statesmen. However, a strong and united minority still remained who vigorously advocated the

original demands, but it was a minority.

The time for which members were paid, having expired, one after another left for home, but before an adjournment was finally had the Democrats got together and passed a set of caustic resolutions laying all the blame of non-action in important matters upon the wicked and monopolistic Republicans. The Republicans, not to be outdone in this matter, with the assistance of a certain Senator possessed of a vitriolic tongue and pen, also concocted "an address to the people," in which they recited at length, the doings of the wicked and whisky loving Democrats; charged them with the commission of every crime in the calendar and credited them with a desire to invent new ones that they might commit them and upon these degraded beings they rightfully placed, so they said, the *onus* of the existing situation.

The minority also came out with what they termed "A Plain Statement," in which they showed the manner in which the proposed legislation had been defeated.

After the adjournment the newspapers throughout the state which had originally opposed the demands, came out simultaneously with a great shout of approval. Revolutionary and anarchistic doctrines had now received their death wound, and would expire. People, said they, had at last come to their senses and would no longer follow revolutionary and communistic leaders who aimed at the destruction of society. The farmers, however, were exasperated and moody; their scheme had failed. At first but little was said; gradually they began in public assemblies to formulate and express their opinions and it was noticed that a large share of their wrath was directed at the political leaders and organizations that had so plainly frustrated their efforts for relief, and as the feeling among them that they had been defrauded, grew and increased, here and

there throughout the state, unwarranted liberties were taken with men who as members of the legislative body had failed to carry out ante-election promises. A number were visited at the dead hour of night by committees supplied with tar and feathers, which they in a most illegal manner proceeded to apply. Some were taken by masked men and stripped and beaten until they promised, if released, to undo the work which they had done, when given an opportunity. As this proceeded the farmers' organizations at once awoke and took most active steps in opposition. Resolutions were passed expelling any member guilty of illegally taking part in demonstrations of a riotous character and investigations set on foot to discover the perpetrators of outrage and the result of these showed most conclusively that "bummers" and hangers-on are in almost every instance the curse of either armies or organizations. And although the reign of tar and feathers quickly came to an end, discountenanced as it was by the better elements of the state, it is yet doubtful whether salutary effects were not produced by these overt acts of lawless citizens. But all agreed that they should come to an end.

As the season advanced, and Spring with the returning warmth of the benignant and all creating sun began to cause the thoughts of the farmers to return to their fields again, the wrath of the agriculturists did not abate, as had been the expectation of some.

Public meetings increased in size and fervor and many declared that until matters of importance were settled they did not care longer to cultivate land merely that others might reap the results of their toil. So great was the excitement throughout the State that attention was attracted to Kansas in all parts of the country and the great city dailies contained standing "stare heads," which called attention to the situation in Kansas. As discussion

proceeded, a demand was gradually evolved that Gov. Clover summon the legislature in extra session to take action which should fairly represent the sentiment of the people of the State. In the excited state of public feeling, business came, very largely, to an end and among business men the call for an extra session found favor, who had previously opposed the "demands" as revolutionary. It began to be plain to them that something radical must really be done, as without an earnest effort was really made to pacify the excited people, they began to fear social disorder of the worst type.

The farmers held solidly to their original demands and many who had heretofore been only luke-warm in their support, spoke in the most decided manner in favor of even more radical measures. Propositions of compromise of one kind or another were made in almost every prominent journal and, in short, the air was full of what appeared to be a coming storm.

Mr. Grafton as an official of the Alliance was engaged in delivering addresses to the farmers' assemblies at various places in the State, in which he counseled the greatest care in obeying the laws and preserving the peace, as well as a united front against compromise of any character. As he was speaking at a gathering of farmers, near Atlanta, a disturbance arose in the audience caused by the interruptions of a drunken man, who wore the star of a detective. Mr. Grafton bore pleasantly with the taunts of the creature, who from time to time continued to apply himself to a bottle with which he was supplied. Finally he became so obstreperous, supported as he was by a little knot of men who had come upon the grounds with him, that it was impossible to proceed and Mr. Grafton paused and said:

"Friends, it is impossible to proceed in this manner. That man must be removed."

"Come and do it yourself," said the now infuriated man, adding an oath.

As no preparation had been made to enforce order, no one started to do the necessary work of removing the creature, who now losing all control of himself began in the most obscene and profane manner to scream with rage, frightening the women and children, who in large numbers were present. Seeing that something must be done at once, Grafton went toward the man, followed by some of the more resolute among the farmers. As he came near the man flourished a revolver and bade the crowd defiance, but Grafton kept steadily on:

"You are a disturber of the peace, and as a citizen I arrest you," said he, but before he could reach him the man fired and Grafton dropped to the ground.

Immediately there was a scene of wild disorder, women screamed, children began to cry and men to curse and swear and rush toward the point of disturbance. The villain was quickly seized and disarmed and a cry went up of:

"Hang him! String him up! Kill the thief!" Reason appeared to have completely disappeared and its place to be taken by a wild, ungovernable fury which converted the gathering of peaceable and easy going farmers into a howling mob, for the moment ungovernable in its character. A lariat rope was quickly taken from a pony tethered near and as quickly placed about the neck of the miscreant and he was hurried to a little distance from the scene of his crime where a suitable tree was standing.

Grafton lay upon the ground where he had fallen. Most of the men, crazed as they were with rage, were engaged in hurrying the murderer towards the fatal tree, which already a young man had climbed and was making signals that the end of the rope might be thrown to him. As the wretch who had caused their fright was dragged away, the women gathered about the wounded man. A lady sat upon the ground and taking Grafton's head in

her lap directed the crowd to stand back. Tearing open his shirt front a brother farmer exposed the fatal wound; a small bullet hole in the left breast with but a drop or two of blood upon the surface told the story. He was bleeding inwardly and would soon be gone. He was yet conscious and as the death damp gathered upon his brow he made feeble signs for water and when his want was supplied he slowly and painfully said:

"Don't let—them hang—him—he was drunk."

Meantime, although the rope was in place over a limb of the tree which had been chosen, the crowd revolting from the idea of murder, had halted temporarily in its work and sent some of their number to make sure whether Grafton was really dead. Coming to where he lay, these, seeing the wounded man with white face and exposed wound, from which trickled now and then a drop of blood, slowly sinking, without sign of life, other than the sigh like respirations which grew more and more infrequent from moment to moment, were seized with that intense sympathy which the sight of bloodshed in a righteous cause is sure to bring to the most hardened and unthinking, and returning hurriedly, themselves seized the end of the rope and began to pull upon it. Instantly hands in plenty laid hold and the wretch was dangling in the air.

"The best laid schemes o' mice and men,
Gang aft a-gley,
And lea'e us nought but grief and pain
For promised joy."

"Still thou art blest compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee,
But och! I backward cast my ee
On prospects drear!
And forward, though I canna see,
I guess and fear."

ROBERT BURNS.

Who that is able to look back upon a checkered life, can fail to acknowledge that he has been "led in a way he knew not?" The future ever appears capable of control, but when it is past we are forced

to the conclusion that we are, and must remain, totally unconscious of the hidden springs from whence come the motives which impel us to the course we pursue. This man lives a fortunate life and that one is pursued by the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. And why? Is it said that the one is wise in choice and careful in council, and the other unwise and foolish in his ways and that thus they themselves have made the beds in which they lie? And who does not know that this instead of being an answer is but a begging of the question? For who made the one wise and the other foolish? Themselves? And can a man make himself do or be anything not provided for in the secret recesses of his mental being when, like the infant oak within the acorn's germ, he first is fashioned as a thought of God? And shall the oak pride and praise itself that it is not a pine?

Than what they are, the oak and the pine could be nothing less and nothing more.

Mr. Ellery was sauntering down the street upon a pleasant Spring-like day, when he met the station agent, who was also the only telegraph operator of the town, who said:

"I have a telegram for Miss Grafton which you ought to know of. Her father has been killed."

The kind-hearted preacher was so horrified and astounded by what he heard that for the moment he could make no sound and stared blankly at the man. At last he found tongue to say:

"How did it happen? Where was he?"

"It was at a picnic near Atlanta in Coles County; somebody shot him and they hung the fellow up without judge or jury. This I get from the wires that are sending it all over the country. The telegram gives no particulars. You better open it."

Taking the terrible missive in his hands Mr. Ellery opened the envelope and read:

ATLANTA, KANSAS, — — —

To Mary Grafton

PLAINVILLE, KANSAS.

Your father was shot and killed near here yesterday. Will come with the body to-morrow.

JAMES GREENE.

Putting the paper in his pocket Mr. Ellery went at once to the house and without circumlocution told his wife the sorrowful news. She, poor lady, with true womanly sympathy exclaimed, as the tears filled her eyes:

"Oh! Oh! My poor Mary. What will my dear girl do? What can she? I shall fear to tell her. She was bound up in her father's welfare and day and night her thoughts were with him."

"But you must tell her," said Mr. Ellery, "and no doubt as it is known on the street some one will tell her as she comes from school if you do not. You must go to the school-house and bring her home at once."

CHAPTER XXV.—THE ORPHANS.

HASTILY putting on her bonnet and shawl, Mrs. Ellery started for the school-house. Conning over in her mind the means she should use in managing the difficult and most distressing errand upon which her unwilling feet were carrying her, she was soon at the door, and although different plans had in turn presented themselves to her mind, she had been unable to decide upon anything definitely. Opening the door she stepped at once, inside resolved at last, that having no plan, she would restrain her own emotions and act with the best judgment furnished her by the inspiration of the moment. As she entered Mary with beaming face and animated manner was engaged in describing to a class of little ones taking their first voyage of geographical discovery, the wonders of the world we inhabit. Interested herself in the subject she was endeavoring to portray, the children hung upon her words with rapt attention. Still for the moment undeter-

mined, Mrs. Ellery sank into a seat and waited her opportunity. Nodding pleasantly to her, Mary continued her work. Sitting there and noting the beautiful form and face, and the ease with which she guided the minds of her little hearers and realizing the terrible shock and despair which was in store for her, Mrs. Ellery could not refrain from feeling like a guilty thing, in that she was preparing to destroy present happiness and plunge the poor girl into a sea of misery.

As ever with her, in moments of trouble, her thoughts ascended to that "present help" upon which her mind had come to lean. "God help her," thought she, "and may I be enabled to render that service to a fellow creature to which every consideration of love and duty impel me."

Occupied with her anxious thoughts, the poor woman for the moment forgot her determination and as the ready tears sprang to her eyes half a sob escaped her. Hastily wiping her eyes she looked up to see if she had been observed. But the keen and observant glance of the young teacher had already noted the trouble depicted upon her countenance and hastily dismissing her little class came at once to her side.

"Something troubles you, aunt," she said, "what is it, can I assist you?"

"Yes," said she, "there is trouble enough at our house. You must dismiss your scholars and go home with me."

"But school will soon be out, will not that answer?"

"No, dear, don't question me, but come at once."

Dismissing her charges, who with wondering faces gathered about her, eager for the reason of the unusual proceeding, she gave this one a pleasant word and the next a pat upon the cheek as she prepared to close the door.

"Children," said Mrs. Ellery, "you must all run home and not trouble Miss Mary now, as I wish to talk to her. Charlie, you must go right along with us."

Taking the arm of her friend as they set out, Mary said: "What is it aunt, has any thing happened to Mr. Ellery?"

"Yes," said the other, inwardly seeking pardon for the deception, "Mr. Ellery is in deep trouble at the house; don't ask me further until we get there."

As they passed through the principal streets of the little village, the sympathetic and sorrowful faces of the people they met, struck poor Mary with a deep and indefinable dread. Setting out with the idea that duty was calling upon her to minister to the sorrows of others, somehow the feeling grew that she was principally concerned. What could it be? Had anything happened to her father? And instantly the thought formed itself in her mind that all was well with him. In whatever situation placed, he had done his duty and quietly and bravely met whatever of good or ill had been given him as his portion. The spirit within him had sustained him. Her spirit should sustain her and whatever burden of sorrow or care might be placed upon her shoulders she would accept and bear it as became the daughter of so true a man.

How wonderful are the daily evidences of mind upon mind? Fix your thought intently upon another and if not attracted by something going on about him, he turns to you as the needle to the pole, to discover the source of the unexplained attraction. And does this end with life? And if the soul still lives, why may it not continue to exert a power which does not depend upon the sight, touch or hearing of that physical body which has alone decayed?

Walking along the street the unseen influences emanating from the people she met—and who will hasten to bar his thoughts against the hallowed influences which may come from those "angels which do always behold the face of My Father?"—had convinced the mind of the devoted girl that upon her head was shortly to fall

a crushing blow, and as surely pointed her thoughts in the true direction.

Her resolution was taken; she would meet whatever came with fortitude. That for the moment the spirit of her father was with her she felt rather than knew; and who shall deny?

Coming to the house, Mrs. Ellery directed their steps to the front door, contrary to the usual custom of the family. This of itself was a revelation to Mary; she already knew the worst.

As they entered, Mr. Ellery met them, and opening the parlor door they all went in and sat down. Taking out his handkerchief Mr. Ellery began to wipe his eyes, while his wife burst into tears; but Mary sat with rigid face, the only sign of the commotion within, the passionate workings of her clenched and bloodless hands.

As Mrs. Ellery's feelings were now beyond control, the preacher, also deeply affected by the play of emotion about him, began in a hesitating and stammering fashion:

"Prepare yourself, my dear—for—for—the worst."

"I am prepared," said she, and as she spoke so hoarse and strange was the sound of her voice that she wondered if indeed it was her own.

"Your father, Mary," he brokenly began, but she did not wait for him to finish.

"I know it all," she said, "he is dead. Tell me the particulars. And may God call me to account if I fail to remember the reason of the death of both my father and my mother."

She could no longer remain in her chair, and rising she stood pale and defiant, her hands twitching nervously, one with the other. Upon the table she saw the crumpled bit of yellow paper upon which was written the telegram. Taking it in her hands she read it calmly through.

"Where is Charlie?" said she: "he followed us through the street."

Going to the window she saw him just

at the door playing with a dog belonging to a neighbor. Quick as a flash she was at the door and down the steps. Seizing him by the hand she hurried him within the house. Taking him on her lap, "big boy" though he considered himself she kissed him again and again.

"Ah! you poor little orphan," said she, "they have killed our father. It might have been expected. We might have known it would be so. Now you are all that is left to me."

Boy like, Charlie began to cry, and the natural womanly tenderness, which for the moment had been in abeyance, asserted itself, as with incoherent sobbings and mingled caresses she fondled the only remaining member of her family. Gradually she became calm again. "And what must we do now?" said she.

"Why my child, you need do nothing. We will see that the necessary preparations are made," said Mrs. Ellery, who by this time could trust herself to speak.

"Ah, I must, I cannot be still. I should go mad to sit and think. I will not again be so weak. Dear aunt, you have been so kind to us and I know you will bear with me now, but I must be employed at something. Please let me help? There will be so much to do."

"Why Mary, you know I was thinking only of you," said Mrs. Ellery, "and if it would please you better, do what you think best."

"The short and simple annals of the poor," are after all not so easily told. Human hopes and fears, with intelligent people, are much the same in whatever walk or station of life fate or fortune may place them. Hope beckons to all and allures us on. Pleased to the last we greet with joy the swift coming days that bear us on to a fate hid behind the curtain of the future, and that curtain—the pall. Yet does not hope desert us, but like an angel of light still bears us company upon the dreary road of life and with her sweet

whisperings of a life beyond, beguiles us still. Beguiles? Ah, and hath hope a partnership with guile? Blessed vision! art thou, too, a vain chimera of that imagination of man which forever bewilders but to deceive?

Perish the thought! It cannot, must not be. Hope is the evidence of sanity; the proof that we are. For whom she hath utterly deserted and forsaken has become a maniac and ceased to be.

Tossing upon her bed, now lost in dreams and now staring with wide open eyes into the dark whose depths revealed no friendly face, Mary wore the night away. Again she was a child and felt her mother's hand resting in peace upon her thoughtless head and as she awoke and felt her loss an unutterable longing for death seized upon her. Oh, that she could but die and leave a world so full of trouble as this. But the thought of Charlie recalled her. Dear little fellow, she would live for him. Again in dreams, her father's proud and kindly gaze was upon her, his face was white as the light, care there was none and peace had come. She woke with a start. Alas! was there nothing real but sorrow and pain.

Slowly the morning dawned and day at last appeared. A funeral day! His funeral! But she would be brave. She would so live and act as to meet their approval. If they knew? Did they know? Surely what was so much desired must be true. No deep and holy longing of the soul could fail in its mission. It would not return void to the heart of love.

The contents of the telegram known, the idle population of the little village gathered at the station as the train drew up. An elderly, kindly faced man in a suit of gray, was the only passenger to alight. Walking forward to the express car he assisted the messenger in depositing upon the platform the rough box containing the coffin. A few hurried words with the station agent, who came to the corner of the

platform and pointed to Mr Ellery's house and the stranger walked rapidly towards the point to which he had been directed. He had gone but a few steps when he met Mr. Ellery, hastening to the train.

"You are Mr. Greene, I suppose," said he.

"Yes," said the man, "and you are Mr. Ellery; I have come upon a sorrowful errand. I was instrumental in inducing my friend Grafton to undertake the work in which he lost his life and now I am here to bury him."

A few words of consultation with friends who stood near, a little time spent in arranging the preliminaries and the coffin was deposited in the parlor at the parsonage.

The funeral ceremonies were as with others, cold, formal and silent. Many were in attendance, for the tragic nature of his death attracted those to whom mere respect would have appealed in vain.

Mary and Charlie, with Mrs. Ellery, took their last look in the parlor and alone. No one was near and no one knew the agony of that hour. Afterward no sign was made. Heavily veiled the daughter of the murdered man betrayed to the casual beholder no emotion, and thus the weary waitings and solemn pauses of the funeral went by, to her, unheeded and uncontrolled.

After all was over, the family at the parsonage gathered in the parlor and Mr. Greene related the particulars of the death, paying the highest tribute possible to the courage and devotion of him who had gone. Mary asked but few questions; she seemed to know it all. Charlie regarded all tearfully, but to his sister his eyes returned and from her he took the color of his thoughts, indeed he seemed to receive his impressions as reflected from her.

Days came and went, the nine days' wonder of the tragedy had ceased to attract, but from it, in part, proceeded a still stronger determination to press to a

decision the question which Grafton had propounded and for which the public came to believe he had sacrificed his life. Monster petitions were circulated asking the governor to convene the Legislature. Immense meetings fired with zeal were held at different places throughout the State and enthusiasm was at fever heat. Again the partisan presses of the State acknowledged by their plaintive tones, the truth, that public opinion is the master of all and to it, perforce, they bowed once more.

Finally Governor Clover issued his proclamation calling an "extra session."

CHAPTER XXVI.—WRANGLING.

AS the legislators began to gather at Topeka, all thought was, for the time, concentrated upon the demands which had been made by the farmer's organizations. Strong ground was taken both for and against and it became evident that dilatory tactics would no longer avail.

The opposition based their claims to support upon the assertion that the proposed legislation would be an act of bad faith and practical repudiation.

On the other hand it was argued that the political compact which forms the foundation upon which all just States and nations, and even civilization and liberty itself are placed, requires all legislation to be based upon the general public good.

The State was simply the agent of the whole people and any intervention in the private affairs of her citizens could only be allowed upon the supposition that thereby the general good of all would be secured. Legislation upon any ground than the general good was tyrannical and unjust. The State did not interfere in the dealings of citizens and proceeded to the forcible collection of debts due from one to another, not upon the ground of favoritism to the creditor, but simply because it had been supposed and held that this forcible interference had been for the

general good, and if it could be shown that such interference and assistance rendered to one party, was contrary to the best interests of the general public, that therefore such legislation was opposed to all the requirements of a just public policy and therefore void and the very ground upon which it was placed was not only un-republican in theory and untenable in law, but vicious, tyrannical and unjust in its effects.

Previous to the meeting of the legislature those who had engaged to support the demands were called together that they might take counsel one with the other. These came from the ranks of all parties, but as the previous season had taught them that a closer union was an absolute necessity, and that they could not succeed if they allowed the claims of other organizations, the natural and inevitable result was the formation of a new party that bound its members to support and defend the course marked out. Having secured this closer organization the lower house at once passed the two bills, prepared at the previous session, staying the foreclosure of all real estate mortgages and the collection of interest upon the same for the space of two years and abrogating the collection of all debts by force of law, which might be contracted on and after the fourth day of July, next succeeding.

The Senate refused to concur and proposed amendment after amendment, but the House remained immovable.

After much time spent in wrangling had passed, the House, by a majority resolution, adjourned, and the members repaired to their homes, with the understanding that their speaker should at once call them together whenever the Senate was ready to pass the original bills. The Senate remained in session, and issuing an address to the people, in which the capitalistic side of the controversy was most ably and cunningly stated, appeared to be preparing for a long and arduous struggle.

No sooner had the House of Representatives adjourned than excitement among the people of the State became intense. Public meetings were everywhere held, attended by vast crowds of people. Eminent men upon both sides made the welkin ring with their denunciations, and feelings rose quickly to fever heat.

Those who held to the justice and expediency of the demands made originally by the farmers, from their constant reference to the rights of the people, came gradually to be called and to call themselves the "People's Party," and they dubbed their opponents "Monopolists" and "Tories."

The so-called monopolists, however, sought to take high moral ground in all their addresses, and spoke chiefly of the sacredness of the rights of property, the inviolability of contracts and descanted at great length upon "public honor," "plighted faith" and the rights of "investors."

The others in making reply denied any intention of interfering with the rights of property and demanded that those who held bonds, notes and mortgages as property, should not be placed in a position to impose upon those interested in property of another kind. "It is," said they, "a struggle between the holders of two classes of property and the dealers in money, notes and mortgages refuse to be satisfied unless they and their interests are placed in a preferred position, where they are enabled to impose upon the holders of productive property, while they themselves produce nothing of value."

Thus the struggle went on and the excitement showed no signs of abatement. In many places riotous proceedings were indulged in and a general feeling of unrest and alarm began to take possession of the public mind.

Plainville showed but little change.

"Uncle Bill" continued to hammer away

in his little shop and Mr. Ellery to deliver his weekly sermons. As elsewhere, the people took sides and the questions which agitated the public mind were discussed with great heat and earnestness. As the people of the village were in close sympathy with the farmers, depending entirely upon them for whatever business the town enjoyed, feeling was almost altogether with them. Upon rare occasions those more interested in what was going on around them went to Branchville to attend a "big speaking," when some noted man held forth upon one side or the other, in the great controversy, but for the most part the place was sleepy enough.

Mary was often seen in company with Mrs. Ellery upon the street or riding in the rather antiquated carriage which the preacher called his own. She had finished her school, with only a week's intermission at the time of her father's funeral and now during the Summer vacation was very quietly engaged in assisting Mrs. Ellery both in the household and in the usual visiting and managing considered the duty of a pastor's wife. No Sunday school picnic was, or as it seemed, could be conducted to a successful end without her aid. Everyone deferred to her and whatever she advised seemed to all concerned the thing to do. In appearance she had changed but little; mild, gentle and cheerful a slightly increased seriousness rather added to the charm of manner with which kind nature had invested her. That the trials of life have for all who will heed, a useful and beneficial end, was manifest in her.

How often do we see the petted and spoiled children of luxury, enervated by ease and made fretful by a constant bending to that will which must needs be broken and crossed, humbled and many times cast down, ere the true lesson of time be learned. For without this the wayward scholar in the school of life remains forever ignorant of those sublime glimpses into the depths which make the mind of

man or woman the kingdom it is destined in riper natures to become. Children we are and children we must remain, ever looking for the unfolding of that time when we shall be able to read the riddle of our lives.

As may be surmised, an occasional letter had reached Plainville, written by George Maitland. From California where he had tarried during the Winter, he had passed to Alaska and his description of the great glacier and of the wonders of this new *terra incognita* were eagerly read by the little circle at the parsonage. Generally his letters had been addressed to Mr. Ellery; parts of these, however, that gentleman glancing hurriedly over the pages, had failed to read to his ready listeners. A few had been directed to Mary and these and their lively and most entertaining contents were most readily shared with her friends. In one of these he had said that on his return to his home in Massachusetts he should again call upon his friends in Kansas, but he had named no date and his immediate advent had not been expected.

That the people at the parsonage were surprised when, one fine Summer morning he made his appearance and claimed their hospitality, may very readily be imagined, for everything which has not become by constant repetition, hackneyed and usual is met by the natural mind with wonder and amazement, more or less pronounced.

Maitland's absence from Kansas and her who had inspired in his heart that genuine admiration of substantial qualities, which is alone the sure ground of a lasting and life-long love, had served but to increase his appreciation and respect for what he had come to regard as a perfect character. It was evident to him that, so far, at least, he had utterly failed to awaken in her that eminent regard for himself which he had come to feel was a necessity to his peace of mind and future success.

The thought of Mary, which in his mind's eye, had taken shape as that of a

beautiful vision and followed him in all his wanderings with a mild and seemingly heavenly radiance, had assumed, for him, a perfect form and an angelic significance. And yet, so wonderful is the power of an absorbing love, that when he had felt the pressure of her hand and looked into the liquid depths of her eyes he was convinced that the half had not been told—or even thought.

CHAPTER XXVII.—THE DAWN.

THAT we are the masters of our little destiny we verily believe. What we are, we have come to consider as the net result of our successes or our failures. But why should we believe this? Whose judgment regarding himself is of value, or in fact, is true? The "Autocrat" tells us that in every man exists a trinity of personages: namely, "the real John, the man others think John to be, and the supposititious and fanciful personage that John imagines himself to be." And while this latter creation is fabulous and unreal, a mere distorted dream of an unsubstantial perception, yet is it made the ground work and very foundation of all John's judgments regarding not only his past career but also the tremendous possibilities which for him may reach beyond the stars, or cease with the light of to-morrow's sun!

No wonder the wise old Greek declared, "know thyself," to be the summing up of all his wisdom. But is not such knowledge wonderful for us? Can we attain unto it? Or, rather, is it not impossible? Upon so insecure and faulty a base can the structure reared be aught but insecure, unstable and misleading?

But when we look away from our puny selves and from the surroundings which come near forming a part of our lives, we see more clearly; that man is not a creator, never a first agent and that he moves only as he is moved upon.

No man has ever created or "made" anything. His greatest and proudest effort

has been but a changing in the form and place of nature's gift. The locomotive is a dream, materialized in steel. Its execution the mere change in form and place of iron ore. At first, and principally, the iron horse is a conception of mind, a thought, a dream. And from whence come thoughts, dreams and conceptions? Does the third and most foolish "John" of the lot, create the sublime plans and conceptions now being slowly unfolded before the astonished gaze of an almost affrighted world?

Nonsense! can we never learn that man is not the Creator; that the source of thought is exterior to man and that man lives only "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God?" Look back, and away and see. The sublime poetry of the past assures us that the Spirit "moved upon the face of the waters" for the unfolding and advancement of all which has since appeared. And upon the poetical and historical truth of this, all men are agreed. What so-called practical people have named the "Spirit of the Age," has ever been seen by all to be a controlling force in the affairs of men.

As in the days preceding the war of the rebellion the prevailing and controlling thought of men was directed against an evil, so in the time of which I write, the thought of the day was being moved to consider yet other evils. The ferment of Democracy was leavening the public mind and although men still continued to hold out against its power, that it was gradually leavening the whole lump could not be disputed. The Spirit was moving upon the face of the waters.

Maitland, too, had felt its power. His early conversations with Mary had put him upon a train of thought at that time new to him. Previously, he had given the subjects which she brought up no attention. He had been reading of late, he said, and trusted that something had been learned. Like new converts, too, he was full of zeal. Something must be done.

Mr. Ellery had been giving Sunday evening "talks," or lectures, in his church, upon subjects relating to the questions of the time, and he invited the young preacher to occupy his pulpit in this course of lectures on the first Sunday after his arrival. His theme was, "The New Christianity," by which he explained he meant the modern application of the precepts of the religion of Christ.

The church was crowded to hear the young man, notices of the lecture having been given out in the morning, and here his college training stood him in good stead. He was what is called "a good speaker," with fine voice and commanding presence, and although his enthusiastic advocacy of what seemed to his audience to be very radical and socialistic sentiments, was listened to with the closest attention, they evidently scarcely knew just what to think or say. The abolition of competition and strife, and its replacement by association and mutual assistance, they appeared to think would be very fine in some future state of existence, but scarcely possible in this. But when, near the close of his address, summoning all his powers, he portrayed the results of such a course of action as he declared the gospel demanded, the effect upon his hearers was most marked.

"By as much," said he, "as thought is above money, love beyond strife, and duty higher than the promptings of selfish greed, let us, forgetting the things that are behind, press forward in the race toward that goal, now in the immediate future, which has ever held the eyes of all the poets and prophets of the past. If we but will it, the kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Coming out of the little church Mary could not refrain from expressing the pleasure she felt in hearing what she had vainly endeavored to formulate, so well expressed.

"You know, Mr. Maitland," said she,

"that our Plainville people had never heard you in public and I am sure they will be pleased with your address."

"And were you pleased?" said he.

"Yes," said she, quite frankly, "I was more than pleased. I was surprised."

"And may I ask why you were surprised?" said he.

"No, I don't think you should inquire too closely, but one thing does surprise me somewhat and that is that you should be able to give so fine a delineation of motives and principles to which you almost refused assent only a few months ago."

"As to that," said he, "I can only say that my attention had not been particularly called to these matters up to the time of my visit to Kansas."

Arrived at the parsonage Mr. Ellery and his wife joined in the warmest expressions of approval and endorsement.

"I know now," said Mr. Ellery, "just what it seems to me you should do, George."

"And what is it?" said he.

"Speaking upon the impulse of the moment, it appears clear to me that you should devote yourself to the spread of the ideas to which you have just given expression. You are young, have abundant means and are not obliged to tie yourself down to a stupid parish, or a set of stupid parishioners, and live in daily fear of saying something which they may not be able to receive. In your case and with your means and abilities I should take Wendell Phillips as my model and launch bravely forth as an agitator."

"Something of this kind has already passed in my thought," said Maitland, speaking slowly and with evident hesitation, "and I presume that I could follow Phillips, at least, afar off."

"You would be hated and subjected to abuse, no doubt," said Mr. Ellery, "but when once fully enlisted in your work you would be happier far than in any other walk of life. People who know not of it,

cannot understand the enthusiasm for humanity which takes complete possession of the man who gives himself to the cause of human freedom. His work possesses him; and even common men and ordinary natures are touched as with a coal of fire from off the altar, by their advocacy of the imperiled rights of men."

Mrs. Ellery added a few words, saying that she thought Mr. Ellery right in what he had said, as he generally was.

"And what do you say, Mary?" said Mr. Ellery.

"Of course," said she, "I am not competent to advise Mr. Maitland as to what he should do, but this I know, that if I were he, nothing should prevent me from making myself heard."

As Mary spoke, so firm and determined were the tones and accent of her voice and so keen the flash of her eye as with unthinking force she expressed her thought, that Mrs. Ellery, who sat near her, said as she placed her arm about her: "Oh, you dear little rebel, they'd just have to hear you; though I'm sure they would wish to. I know I should."

Mary blushed as she said, "why, aunt, did I speak so strongly as that?"

"Oh no, dear, you said nothing out of the way, but you are so earnest and determined that I should not like to undertake to thwart you. I know we all ought to be positive and determined in a good cause."

"If you will speak upon these topics," said Mr. Ellery, "I can put you in communication with some parties who will be glad to make appointments for you. They will see that your expenses are paid and may possibly be able to give you something beside, but it will be but little that they can do in that line. Although the work would not be remunerative the experience would be valuable and you could in this way make trial of what, no doubt, would prove an interesting experience."

Long after the ladies had retired, the

two gentlemen remained in earnest conversation; just what the subject of their conference might be did not appear, but that Maitland should undertake a series of addresses seemed to be agreed before they separated for the night.

As stated in the last chapter the State Senate still remained in session. On the adjournment of the lower House, efforts were made to bring influences to bear upon the Senators which should induce them to vote for the passage of the bills already passed by the representatives. Disturbances in various parts of the State and the angry remonstrances of the people continued until the Senators began to fear that if they longer refused assent to the action of the House that civil discord of an aggravated kind might be the result. So upon the presentation of an immense petition containing a majority of the voters in the districts represented by certain Senators they signified their intention of voting for the bills. This broke the majority and with the passage of a resolution which was in the nature of a protest, the missing representatives were summoned, concurrent action was had and the bills were passed and quickly signed by the Governor.

The victory was complete. Men saw that the voice of the people was the voice of God; that what had wrongfully been termed "public opinion" was not only a force, which when aroused, could not be turned aside or defeated, but that it was also identical with that power above man which has ever operated to secure the slow, yet continuous, development of the race.

According to the terms of the bill, all laws for the collection of debts contracted subsequent to the fourth day of July were abrogated and annulled. Henceforth he who by the power of money secured an advantage over his fellow men could not claim the power of the courts as an aid to his designs. Debt, said the agitators, that foe to liberty and chief arm of tyranny, will now be eliminated and destroyed.

Great was the rejoicing among those who had from the first seen the causes of inequality and injustice. This, said they, is the first step in the grand march of freedom. The people have now turned their backs upon Pharaoh. They will go out of bondage and possess the land. But much remains to be done; the wilderness is yet to be passed and Pharaoh will yet pursue.

The "glorious fourth" was now close at hand, and immediately upon the passage of the bills which had decreed the new abolition, a celebration had been arranged for Branchville upon that day, and Maitland had been engaged as one of the speakers. Possessed of natural powers of a high order, these had been aided and assisted by an education which enabled him to grasp at a glance the full significance of the mighty movement yet in its incipency. Entering into its spirit with all the ardor of youth and the force of a thoroughly aroused purpose, he delivered the address of the day. The man had come to himself and into possession of powers till then unrevealed and unsuspected. Heretofore he had known no overmastering incentive; reared in luxury, his every want supplied, the man had not known himself. Now controlled by a generous purpose he threw himself, with all his force into the fray.

The effect upon his audience was electrical, as with ringing voice and stalwart frame he paced the platform, now picturing the beauty of that civilization which the future should yet prepare, and now in thunder tones denouncing the wrong and injustice of the past. "Yet I warn you," said he, "that the battle is but begun. New foes will rise and upon new fields our courage and our valor must yet stand the test. Let us then, renewing our vows, reconsecrate ourselves to the cause of human freedom, conscious that the battle we wage is not alone for those who stand with us to-day, but for all men and for all time."

Coming down from the speaker's stand, hundreds pressed forward to take him by the hand. But his eyes sought out the little school teacher and the expression he read in her face outweighed the plaudits of all else beside. Evidently her opinion of his character and abilities was subject to change.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE SUN RISES.

ALTHOUGH great rejoicing had accompanied the passage of what had come to be called "abolition bills," no very marked change was perceptible as an immediate result of their passage. On account of the agitation preceding, ordinary business had for some time been done upon practically a cash basis. Merchants bought smaller bills and paid for them on receipt, or in ten or thirty days. On these terms those who possessed good reputations had no difficulty in procuring all the goods they could sell. That some who did not, should be "weeded out" was not a cause of very general sorrow. But the giving of long credits and the formation of large debts, subject as these had been to gnawing interest charges, came at once to an end, and in a general way, if people could not pay they did not buy. The passage of the "stay law" had stayed for a time, at least, the sending out of the state of immense sums of interest money, which in the aggregate were larger than all the surplus crops would bring in the market. Gradually it came to be seen by merchants and all classes of people that business was being conducted with greater ease and security and that the amount of money available in the hands of the people for the purchase of necessities was very slowly increasing. As a result too, of the new legislation a general feeling of hopefulness regarding the future began to spring up among those who had hitherto looked forward only with distrust and fear. It began to be seen that in the future the little accumulations of the la-

borer would be placed upon a more secure foundation and that if successful in saving, his little hoard could not be taken from him by deep schemes aided by the law. What he got he had. Labor was protected. Men found out that business as it had been conducted, backed up by law wholly in the interest of the creditors was not widely different from gambling; in a game too, where all the winning chances were on the side of the "bank." And it began to be clear that a state of society which compelled everybody to play at this game, and against those who in the long run were certain to win, could not be equitable or just. As for the future, the game had come to an end and people were heartily glad of it. Paying up the "gambling" debts of the past was however a serious matter and as was inevitable, caused, in some cases, serious trouble. Here and there people whose goods and chattels were mortgaged, were heartlessly sold out, but the public disapprobation of these acts was so marked and plainly expressed that but few were thus stripped of their property. Those who held mortgages upon goods and chattels, where their debtors could not pay, in order to secure their debts, very generally took possession of the chattels mortgaged, went through the forms of a sale and bought in the property. If the property thus acquired was necessary to the debtor as a means of making a living, as in case of a farmer's team, public sentiment required—and it was very generally obeyed—that the property be loaned to the debtor for a limited time, with the opportunity of purchase, for a fixed sum, within the limited time stated. And although a number of cases of hardships were reported in every community, as a result of the new regime, still in almost every deserving case friends came forward and by purchase prevented actual suffering.

During the transition period through which the people of Kansas at that time passed, while affairs could not be said to

be in a highly prosperous condition yet the feeling of confidence in the future grew and steadily increased. The present is not joyous, said they, but grievous, still when once we are freed from the results of our past errors it will be impossible to get us into such a state again. The future is secure.

Hope made the trials of the time light when once debt was seen to be an evil which could be got rid of. And that this might be accomplished, people very generally adopted means of saving that they had previously refused to employ, proving very conclusively that the actual and absolute necessities of life are indeed few and quite readily obtained.

Although capitalists and money lenders had prophesied the ruin of business and the impoverishment of the people, as a result of legislation which they denounced in the most unsparing terms, the actual happenings refused to justify their predictions. As time passed on business in the towns slowly improved and merchants acknowledged that: "Although transfers are not large in amount, still we know each night how much we have made, and are not obliged to balance in our minds the probabilities of collection."

And just here, too, took place the very opposite of what had been confidently predicted by the opposers of radical legislation: Land began very slowly to rise in value. Farms and residence property in the towns had fallen in value until it had been impossible to make sales at a figure in excess of the mortgages which covered seven-eighths of the real estate of the State. But it began to appear, that under the laws, if one once owned land free from incumbrance that it would be impossible to take it from him and as the business of loaning money appeared to be losing the advantages heretofore assured to it by very partial laws those who had heretofore loaned money, with keen business perception quickly saw that as real estate or land

was the ultimate security of all financial operations, that it offered almost the only opportunity for safe investment. In an agricultural State, too, controlled by farmers, they felt secure against future legislation which might discriminate against land owners. So the policy of investors began to change, as very slowly and cautiously they began to buy.

The stay law had frightened the holders of real estate mortgages and they became anxious to exchange their claims for deeds. But as the law had put off the payment of mortgages and interest upon them for two years, owners were not very anxious to concede anything in the matter of values. Fearing, however, that at the end of the two years "stay," another would be enacted, holders of mortgages very generally instructed their agents to buy the land upon which they held claims, at as low a rate as could be secured.

But one result was possible; land increased in value and money became plentier in the hands of the people. He who held a large quantity of land sold off half, paid his mortgage and swore by all the gods at once, never to get into debt again—of course he would have one day broken so wise a resolution, if the laws had not been so arranged as to make him keep it. He who had an expensive farm sold it and bought a cheaper one, free from incumbrance, which was no sooner bought than he found himself able to sell again at an advance. Many farmers as well as town dwellers began to buy and sell, and upon each exchange they made a profit, because what they were dealing in was constantly rising in value and because money in the hands of the people was constantly increasing in amount.

Beginning slowly and very gradually a few months saw a wonderful change in the condition of the great majority of the people in the State. Following the rise in real estate, property of all kinds quickly advanced. Kansas was upon a "boom."

Business of every kind increased and all who wished to be were employed. Heretofore every advance in the price of real estate or in the prospects of communities had been followed by a season of great depression upon the subsidence of the "boom," from the fact that those who had been tempted by increasing prices to invest had heavily incumbered themselves with promises to pay. But this was now impossible. All transactions were for cash. The promise of future payment had lost the power of law and debts were thus prohibited. What a man had he was sure of. Gambling in futures had received a set back.

The farmers had "builded better than they knew," and Kansas began to be heralded abroad as the most prosperous State in the Union, as indeed it was.

So plain and marked were the changes brought about by the passage of the "abolition bills" that the advantages conferred upon the people of the State were acknowledged by all and opposition was hushed. Even the money lenders had in a short time been able to increase their wealth vastly more by dealing in land than they had been able to do in their former business. Under these circumstances the only people who seemed dissatisfied with the condition of affairs were those who having adopted the ideas of Henry George and "the single tax" upon land, prophesied that the evils of land monopoly would now shortly begin to appear. But what they said had but little weight with people who for years had found land unprofitable and unremunerative.

So plain, too, had been the benefits flowing to all classes from the legislation secured by the political action of the united farmers, that other Western States hastened to adopt the same. And although the bondholders and financial authorities of the money centers used all their influence and spent much money to defeat the proposed legislation, still the

result in Kansas was too plain, too thoroughly known and too entirely beneficial, to be gainsaid or disputed, and with the best grace possible they submitted in one State after another to the defeats which had been in store for them.

That the people of a whole State, sunk in debt and taxed with enormous interest charges, should so readily and easily escape from what appeared to be a coming and hopeless bankruptcy, appeared to most as the result of a miracle, or the direct favor of Providence, and yet all had been secured only as the direct result of the taking away of special and law granted privilege.

I have thus hastily sketched some of the results attained within less than two years. Others were secured not here mentioned. The people were nearly freed from debt and the courts almost abandoned. Lawyers tramped the country roads searching for an opportunity to teach school or earn an honest livelihood, and the example of Kansas was an inspiration to the oppressed in every land. At the next regular session of the legislature a law was passed which exempted from all taxation a homestead, valued at \$3,000, actually used and occupied by a family. The home whether in town or country, was thus freed from all taxation and the family protected and secured against its loss. It could be sold outright, but not otherwise alienated.

During all this time Maitland had been incessantly engaged. He was called for from every point of the compass, and, like the trusty soldier he was, he was ever found in the thickest of the fight. Several times the forces opposed had seemingly been upon the point of gaining a victory and thus delaying the final and inevitable result, but each time his splendid powers and matchless oratory had turned the tide. Hopeful and buoyant, his speeches rang with good cheer and that hope and confidence in final victory which encouraged and inspired success.

At the time of which I write he was in Iowa, engaged in the work which had employed all his powers since his first effort at Branchville.

The following letter written by him at that time will explain itself:

DES MOINES, IOWA, ———

REV. MR. ELLERY,

My Dear Friend:—As you are aware we have gained a great victory and have now secured for Iowa the legislation which has resulted in so much good to Kansas. But we have only just begun and much remains to be done. Our enemies taunt us with destroying credit and say that we have made it impossible for private parties to obtain large amounts of money for great and necessary works of public utility. This is doubtless true and from my standpoint is not the least of our victories. Let us make it impossible. For great works, the nation, the State, the county, or the municipality must in future take the place of private and irresponsible corporations and companies. At present many of these are our masters. In a republic the people in theory, rule. Let us not rest until this theory has been reduced to practice, for in no other way can we escape that taxation without representation against which our revolutionary fathers rebelled. The money power, the railroads and the trusts, tax us freely; we are without representation upon their boards.

Let us rebel.

But I sat down to write for another purpose. I am coming down to see you again. From what you write I hope to receive a different answer from Mary Grafton from that given me, now more than two years ago. I felt terribly repulsed at the time, but it was the answer I should have been given. I ought to have known better. As sure as you live though, I think her influence has made a man of me. But I will not bother you with the thoughts of a man in love. You may expect me on Saturday the 10th.

As ever, Yours truly,

GEORGE MAITLAND.

CHAPTER XXIX.—SUNSHINE.

It is now nearly seven years since our readers were introduced to the people of Plainville. Many changes have taken place and all our old friends show plainly the passage of time. Mr. Ellery had been for some years occupying the debatable ground between middle life and old age. Now the matter had been decided for him and it was clear that he was no longer young. But age with him, while frosty was yet kindly. Time had dealt gently with him and while the fire of youth

had departed, yet was its place better filled by an increase of that charity and hope for all, which age cannot wither nor custom stale. To meet him was a pleasure, to know him a benediction, and to be near him an assurance of high thoughts and noble impulses. His congregation felt all this and now had no thought of change. They did not know that what he *was* and not what he *said* was the source of love they felt for him. Yet so it was. In the troublous times through which they had passed he had never failed to speak clearly and plainly upon the topics of the day. All knew him to entertain the most radical opinions and yet his utterances had been tempered with so great and plain a love for all, in every station of life, that none dared take offense.

Mrs. Ellery, dear, kind, motherly soul, had changed but little. Life to her was a pleasure. Long years before she had well learned the truth that self seeking surely ends in loss of that happiness for which all, without exception, seek. Early had she learned that from the very nature and constitution of things selfishness defeats itself; that true happiness is always derived from an exterior source, and that it can only reach us as a reflection of that which elsewhere exists. That our love can create happiness in others and that its reflection upon ourselves is absolutely the only source we have of true and lasting pleasure, she had mastered. What wonder then that she was happy and beloved? With no thought of self she had devoted herself to the distressed and forsaken. None appealed to her motherly heart in vain; the sorrows of all were her sorrows and in their joys she rejoiced. Though pinched by "genteel poverty" herself, she had opened wide her door and her heart to Mary and the motherless boy, at time of their greatest need. But she had been repaid by the love of the children, more fond, mayhap, than that of her own might have been.

Mary—our Mary—now a beautiful woman of twenty-three, still taught in the village school. She had always been the pride of Plainville, but now since her father's tragic death she had been adopted as the daughter or sister of every loyal resident. With a pleasant nod for all she yet maintained that calm equipoise of manner which she could not hide, the superior soul. How much of Mr. Ellery's radical stand for truth was due to her influence could not be determined; psychology and philosophy as yet are but words used for the concealment of thoughts which take hold upon the verities of life. Much remains for which words afford no expression. And she herself, whence did she derive that superiority which without a word from her, impressed itself upon all? The daughter of her father, were his hopes and aspirations, which in him had been but as the shadow of power, recreated in her to blossom and bloom with a fragrance and beauty which compelled that of which he only dreamed?

Or was her life her own, and is each vital spark but a flame, whose source is the Eternal Light, which must needs take character from the mortal body upon which it feeds? In all life, does not arrested and imperfect growth result in evil and distortion? And is not the source of all the same?

Charlie was now a bright boy of ten. His sister had exercised over him, as she had promised, a mother's care, and with such a mother and such a household as that in which he found his home he could not be otherwise than obedient and affectionate.

Plainville was "looking up" they said. New buildings were appearing on every hand and an era of thrift and substantial improvement seemed setting in. No large and pretentious brick and stone palaces, constructed with borrowed capital and covered with mortgages, to pamper the pride and eat and corrode the substance of the builders, were attempted, but better yet, the modest dwellings of the residents began to show, by here a coat of paint and

here an added room or a new "piazza," the solid and substantial progress of a people who having learned the hatefulness of borrowed finery were resolved henceforth not to spend money before they had it.

Upon the receipt of Maitland's letter Mr. Ellery resolved, like the true and loyal friend he was, to learn from Mary the probable result of the suit, which he had written he should again resume. Of course Mrs. Ellery was to be the medium through whom the desired information might be obtained. Reading the letter to her, he said:

"Don't you think you ought to acquaint Mary with the substance of this letter and learn from her George's probable answer? This would save them both some embarrassment, and possibly pain."

"Perhaps so," said she, "and yet I dislike to appear to intrude. Affectionate and loving as she is, yet no one would ever know the secrets of her heart unless she saw fit to reveal them."

"True enough, but I know George, now, intimately. I have been his confidant in this matter, you know. He means just what he says, and it occurs to me that as his friend I should make an effort to save him a possible refusal. Aside from the claims of friendship, the gifts we have received from him, surely call for at least, the effort to serve him. And as we are not called upon to exert any influence we may possess, but simply to find out the state of her mind, it does seem that you ought to make the attempt."

"It seems strange that we are obliged to ask her and that we have no idea what her answer may be," said Mrs. Ellery, "and yet, when we think of her, as she is, we know that she would sooner die than reveal by a look, a feeling which she might wish to conceal."

At the next favorable opportunity Mrs. Ellery said:

"Mary, Mr. Maitland will be here on Saturday."

"Will he? Well now we shall hear the story of the Iowa campaign. Wasn't that a grand speech at Fort Dodge? Even the *Register* could not refrain from words of praise."

"Yes it was grand, just to hear it read, but to have heard him deliver it must have been impressive indeed. But Mary, he is coming to again ask you to marry him, and both Mr. Ellery and myself are anxious to know whether you have another refusal in store for him, or not."

Mary blushed, but her eyes were steady as she said:

"Has he requested you to ask for him?"

"No, indeed, he has no idea of such a thing, but our wish is to save you both possible annoyance and pain. That is all. I am sure nothing would have induced me to speak as I have if I did not know that you had once refused him."

Mrs. Ellery said no more. She knew Mary too well to add anything to what she had said. Mary was silent; her eyes sought the floor and only the clasping of her hands one with the other, revealed the emotion within. At last she said, speaking very slowly:

"Mr. Maitland is a man whom I respect and admire. Let him speak for himself."

That was all, and although Mrs. Ellery remained in an expectant attitude, the subject was not again alluded to.

Speaking to Mr. Ellery of the matter afterward, she said:

"Mary is a wonderful woman; she treated the matter as a queen might have done; gracious and cordial though she was, she yet reserved her thought. Of this, though, I feel sure: George need not fear."

Saturday came at last, as looked-for days have ever done, and with it the expected arrival. Mr. Ellery was at the depot and warmly greeted his friend. On the way to the parsonage many hands were to be grasped and hearty greetings exchanged, for Maitland had now become not only a noted man but a general favorite. "Uncle

Bill" grasped his hand with a terrible squeeze, saying:

"God bless you, Mr. Maitland for what you have done and for what I believe you will yet do."

And as Maitland, for the moment engaged in conversation half a dozen others, who gathered to speak a word of welcome, he said, *sub voce*, to Mr. Ellery: "I take back all I once said to you agin him," indicating Maitland with an inclination of the head, "he is a royal man, if he is a preacher, and now I shan't say a word agin his carrying off our favorite. Poor Grafton, I hope his girl will be happy. She is a splendid woman and the man that gets her will have a treasure, sure."

Arrived at the parsonage Mrs. Ellery kissed the traveler as she would a son and appeared overjoyed to see him, but as Mary gave him her hand her usual self-possession failed her, she blushed deeply and the tell-tale color overspread her face. Presently she recovered, and the conversation became general regarding the Iowa campaign and the wonderful success which had followed the efforts of the "agitator," as now he was willing to be called.

Mr. Ellery was so much interested in the details, as related by his friend, that he had not noticed that Mrs. Ellery had left the parlor where they sat. Casting his eye toward the open door he saw his wife, who, standing where she was only to be seen by him, stood, beckoning him to follow her. Excusing himself, as best he could, in a few moments, he too departed.

How it came about he never could tell, but no sooner had the Ellerys left the room than Maitland seated himself by Mary's side and took her hand. She did not withdraw it. Emboldened he placed his arm around her and drew her head upon his shoulder. The ready tears, her mother's legacy, came into her eyes but he kissed them away as he clasped her to his heart. Whispered confidences and sweet embraces followed in rapid succession. How

long they were thus employed neither knew, when Mrs. Ellery, with much rattling of doors, returned to summon them to supper. Rising, Mr. Maitland said:

"Aunt Ellery, allow me to present the future Mrs. Maitland."

Mrs. Ellery could scarcely keep back the tears as she pressed her foster child to her heart. "Ah, children," said she, "you don't know how happy I am for you. God bless you both."

But little remains to be told. At the time of the marriage, which occurred shortly after Maitland's return, the elder Maitland, now advanced in years and thoroughly proud of his gifted son, came to Plainville, entreating his old friend Ellery to return to Massachusetts with him, offering to place him in comfort for the rest of his days.

But the old preacher would not listen to it. "I have put on the harness," said he, "and I shall die at my post." Not to be balked, however, the other, saying that he wished to have the privilege of subscribing to the "cause" settled \$500 a year upon his old friend, which was regularly thereafter paid.

John Busteed had been convicted of a crime and sentenced to the penitentiary, but his father secured a pardon for him and established him in business in Idaho, where report says he is "doing better."

Charlie, although the little fellow scarcely knew what to make of the turn affairs had taken was completely assured by his sister who said: "You haven't lost anybody, have you dear? You've only gained a big brother," (glancing shyly at Maitland) "and he is just as good as he can be too."

IS THE WORLD GETTING BETTER.

Whether the doctrine of man's evolution from the brute be true or no, this at least is sure—much of the brute yet remains in man. With the brute the strange and unusual is to be fought and destroyed. Thus with the savage. The member of another tribe is fit only to die and be eaten.

But cannibalism is no longer fashionable, and even the thumb screw, the rack and the stake, as proof of the correctness of our tribe's mode of thought, are passing away. Yet the instinct which formed the impulse remains. Now we only hate the new thought and crucify—in our minds—the unwelcome truths of him who disturbs our fancied security. Nature still claims her tribute, and now that we can no longer put the innovator to death we bespeak him smoothly to his face and straightway pro-

ceed to villify, denounce and misrepresent him.

Ideas were not burned at the stake nor beheaded on the block, neither will they be killed or put to flight by the wolfish howl of the detractor. Revolutions always advance. The world does more and they who would not lose their reckoning must learn to change their point of observation.

With the brute, to bear sway or hold dominion is the chiefest good. Beyond this, man in the mass has not advanced; even Sunday-school urchins being mentally fed upon a diet of crowns and golden harps. Naturally, the average man desires, above all, to lord it over some one or many—weaker than himself. That if he rules, others must wait and weep, is small matter to him. Power he must have.

Ownership of men's bodies is old; the world has outgrown it, for tribute is a craftier trick. Debts demand tribute, interest is its life, and by means of bonds, bondage is enforced. Armies and navies exist but to defend them. The brutish instinct still survives and upon an exagger-

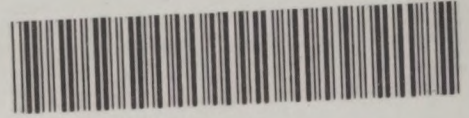
ation of debts the crafty few have taken their stand; when supported by the lawyer and the courts they overcome the land. Destroy the possibility of debt and the fabric of modern slavery crumbles into dust.







LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00022936876